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LORD SHANMUKHA

FOREWORD

Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha was established in 1952 and with the subsequent commissioning of its Hall, rated as one of the best in the country, it has played a unique role in the national integration and cultural synthesis of this country. Its portals remain open to individuals and institutions from all over the country and abroad without distinction of creed, race, religion or nationality. The Hall has been patronised by all National, Regional political parties and leading social, educational, corporate and cultural institutions.

Shanmukhananda does not confine catering to cultural requirements alone, but extends beyond. As part of its programme of propagation, research and education in Music and Fine Arts, it runs a Sangeetha Vidyalaya, one of the best of its kind in India, publishes a quarterly journal **SHANMUKHA**, which is spoken of highly among literary and cultural circles, and takes care of the health of the community by providing medical care and education as well as yoga and meditation.

SHANMUKHA which was started in April 1975 has with this issue, successfully completed an unbroken run of 25 years. Its unproclaimed aim and objective has been to be an instrument of education and promoting excellence in Fine Arts. Working towards this goal we have been striving hard to present the evolution and growth of the arts over the centuries, with particular regard to historical accuracy, meticulous scholarship and bias free objectivity of presentation and in a style free from verbiage and honking rhetoric. Every article is presented with a full sense of responsibility and accountability to the public at large.

Original articles from erudite scholars and eminent artists; critical evaluation of various aspects, concepts and facets of the arts in a 'micro-balance', well-researched articles on composers, their creations and their enunciation; profiles of performers and scholars, past and present; reproduction of rare write-ups culled from the archives and elsewhere; dissertations and papers presented at seminars/symposia; interviews, reviews, thought-provoking discussions on tradition, trends and innovation, publishing notation of rare compositions; book reviews, anecdotes etc have been features of **SHANMUKHA**.

Result : an invaluable quarterly ranking high in cultural and intellectual circles, attracting researchers both in India and abroad and comfortably nestling itself in its due place in the Literature of Music & Fine Arts. The high standard and substance of **SHANMUKHA** also received complimentary mention in the Rilm abstracts of Music Literature, of City University of New York.

With humility and a strive-hard culture, **SHANMUKHA** pledges to forge ahead in its mission and seeks your blessings and patronage.

- Editor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
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SHANMUKHA

(Quarterly Journal of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha)

Celebrates its

SILVER JUBILEE

(Completion of 25 years)

on Sunday, the 14th May 2000 at 5.30 p.m.
at Sabha's Main Auditorium.

Shri Govind Swaroop

Secretary, Govt. of Maharashtra, Cultural Affairs Dept.,

has kindly consented to be the Chief Guest at the Celebrations
and release the **SILVER JUBILEE ISSUE** of the Journal

First copy will be received by Shri Subbudu

Shri K. S. Mahadevan

Founder Hon. Editor of "SHANMUKHA"

Shri Subbudu

Veteran Musicologist and Renowned Art Critic

and

Dr. (Smt.) Sulochana Rajendran

Hon. Editor, "SHANMUKHA"

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Prize of this special issue : Rs.25/-

Editor : Dr. (Smt.) Sulochana Rajendran

The views expressed in SHANMUKHA are the writer's own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publishers.

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In Focus

SHANMUKHA

With solemn prayers to the presiding deity Lord Shanmukha, "the symbol of youth and resurgence, the saviour of mankind, the embodiment of knowledge and wisdom and a model of utter renunciation", we offer this bumper Silver Jubilee Year Issue and wish all our readers, contributors, advertisers and well-wishers a very Happy 'Vikrama' year.

How sophisticated has the art of Bharata Natyam been since ancient times? An erudite scholar-archaeologist takes us down the centuries tracing its evolution as depicted in paintings and sculpture.

Was he a poet, a philosopher, spiritual thinker, a mystic, a Bhakta or a saint? 'What was Sri Tyagaraja's role in Music?' He was all these plus more - according to his ardent devotee. A thesis culled out from our archives.

A musicologist analyses the much-discussed Twentytwo Srutis and their practical application. While a musician bemoans "Oh! Sruti, where art thou?"

Ever heard of children waking up mother? Yes. Here, a poet does, sings a "Palli Ezhuchchi" - "Mother, Arise, Awake, Act !" successfully.

The glorious accompanist that he was, Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai was one of the "most towering and exalted" musicians of the past generation. A profile in praise of the maestro is reproduced here.

"Concert Tradition" - What the Margadarshi speaks.

The Sangeetha Bhishma Pitha turns 92 and he chaired SHANMUKHA'S Decennial celebration. We pay our Pranams to this living legend in our Silver Jubilee year.

A modern day Guru, a Karma Yogi who elevated institutionalised coaching on par with Gurukula in Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya, too turns 90 this year, and our Pranams in a 'profile'.

With the aid of technology Music Tradition will stay alive asserts a connoisseur. And an artiste-academician of the Hindustani Music draws our attention to Indian Music in the perspective of World Music.

A great flautist of Hindustani Shaili, speaks to our correspondent in an interview - now a regular feature of SHANMUKHA.

The rich legacy of Tamil Music - Vaggeyakaras' contribution - is traced in chaste Tamil.

Tributes to "Margadarshi" of Manipuri, Guru Bipin Singh and flautist Pt. Devendra Murdeshwar, cultural highlights and a Book Release form other features of this issue.

Messages (Excerpts)

The Prime Minister is happy to learn that SHANMUKHA quarterly journal of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, will celebrate its Silver Jubilee in May, 2000.

On this auspicious occasion, the Prime Minister extends his greetings and best wishes to the organisation.

(Kanchan Gupta)
Officer on Special Duty
PMO, New Delhi.

I am happy to learn that the prestigious Music Journal SHANMUKHA is celebrating the Silver Jubilee of its publication in May 2000. Shanmukhananda Sabha is a landmark Institution of Mumbai devoted to music, dance and fine arts and has rendered invaluable services to the promotion of the cultural services of the City. Dance, drama and music please the eye and ear of the rasika; it kindles the esoteric perceptions of the connoisseur. It has the infinite capacity to take one's mind from realm of mundane life into regions of ethereal charm. Shakespeare said in *Romeo and Juliet*.

*"When gripping grief
the heart doth wound And doleful dumps
The mind oppress
Music with her Silver Sound
With speedy help doth lend redress."*

The Journal "SHANMUKHA" is devoted to the Art and Science of Music. It caters to the appetite of the rasika and the connoisseur of music, dance and other fine arts. Its scholarly presentation devoid of any petty controversies has marked it a class apart from any similar issues.

On the happy occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the publication of "SHANMUKHA", I offer my best wishes for the Journal both prosperity and perpetuity.

R. Venkatraman
Former President of India, New Delhi.

The quarterly journal SHANMUKHA published by Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha through its well-researched analytical articles has been doing commendable service in educating the people, especially the new generation on the history, evolution, trends, innovations and most importantly the spiritual contents of arts.

I congratulate the Sabha and all those associated with it on the happy occasion of the Silver Jubilee of SHANMUKHA.

P. C. Alexander
Governor of Maharashtra

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TATA INDICA • SUMO • SAFARI • SIERRA • ACCESSORIES

I am glad to know that SHANMUKHA, the quarterly journal of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha, is completing 25 years of its service to the cause of fine arts. The journal is publishing quality articles and educating the public on all aspects of fine arts, particularly music. I hope the Silver Jubilee celebration of the journal which is to be held in May 2000 will prove a great success.

C. Subramaniam

Former Governor of Maharashtra,
Chennai

* * * * *

I am immensely pleased to hear that with the issue of April 2000 the Sabha's Quarterly Journal SHANMUKHA will be completing 25 years of its publication.

While I cherish my memories of my very close association with Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha it is hardly necessary to emphasise that the contribution of SHANMUKHA journal towards the development of Karnatic music and encouraging the deserving musicians has been immeasurable.

I take this opportunity of wishing the Silver Jubilee function all success.

Semmangudi R. Srinivasalier

Chennai

* * * * *

Memories of the Inaugural Day are still fresh in my mind. I find it hard to believe that 25 years have flown so quickly. All these years, SHANMUKHA has been purposefully serving the cause of classical Music and Dance through educative and informative articles without entering into any controversies.

I feel that it would be very useful if selected articles of SHANMUKHA are revitalised to reach larger connoisseurs and students of music.

I wish the function all success. My best wishes to this magazine for its continued meritorious service.

Lalgudi G. Jayaraman

Chennai

* * * * *

SHANMUKHA stands for
Scholarship
Sobriety
Simplicity
Subtlety
Sincerity and
Service

Shanmukhananda Society has become the Cultural Taj Mahal of India.

Subbudu
Delhi

SHANMUKHA - in its own small but effective way - has for 25 years now been serving the public and keeping it *au fait* with the past and present trends in music and dance. Its main thrust has been in the direction of impartial assessment and critical acclaim.

This is a momentous point in its career. That is a matter for congratulation and a spur to serving the art-loving public, especially our members, with greater enthusiasm and dedication.

K. S. Mahadevan

(Former Editor) SHANMUKHA
Chennai.

* * * * *

I am delighted to hear that Quarterly SHANMUKHA will be completing 25 years of its publication with the issue of this April.

I have been a regular reader of the journal and have also contributed a number of articles from time to time. I wish to congratulate the Sabha upon its maintaining a high standard of production all these years and I wish the journal a brighter future and more purposeful service to our glorious performing arts.

T. S. Parthasarathy

Fellow, Sangeet Natak Akademi
Chennai.

* * * * *

It is rather strange that notwithstanding all the greatness and popularity of Indian classical music and dance, journals devoted to these arts are very few. Several journals in English, Tamil and other languages launched with great hopes, had to close down for want of patronage.

In this context Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha of Mumbai did well in starting the SHANMUKHA with the distinguished music critic Sri K. S. Mahadevan as its founder editor. I am happy to hear that SHANMUKHA will be completing 25 years of its publication with the April issue. I have had occasions to peruse a few issues of SHANMUKHA and admired the meticulous manner in which it is being edited.

T. T. Vasu

President, Music Academy,
Chennai

GUARDIAN DEITIES OF SONG AND DANCE POSTED IN THE FLAG STAFF

With the heralding of the Tretayuga under the reign of Vaivasvata Manu, people had become ease-loving and pleasure seeking. They were under the sway of Desire, Greed, Jealousy and Anger. Their happiness was marred by infatuation and sorrow. Led by Indra, the Gods approached Brahman with the request, "We want an object of diversion, which must be audible as well as visible. As the Vedas are beyond the grasp of many people, create yet another veda which will really belong to all sections of the people". The Lord meditated on the four Vedas and taking Pathya from Rg, Sangeeta from Saman, Abhinaya from Yajus and Rasa from Atharva, created the Natyaveda to entertain and enlighten the humanity. The Lord then ordered that this Natyaveda be practised and presented to the people. Feeling unequal to the task, Indra passed on the command to the Sages. Bharata Muni, the doyen of Sages got the men and material prepared to fulfil the Lord's command.

The first dramatic performance was to be enacted during the Banner Festival of Indra. The theme was to depict the victory of the Gods over the Daityas and Asuras. As the performance progressed, there was naturally jubilation amongst the victors and some jaw-gnashing amongst the vanquished. Resorting to Maya, the Vighnas and Asuras sabotaged the play-paralysing speech, movement and memory.

Indignant at the interruption, Indra took up the Banner-staff and pulped to death the destroyers of the play. The Banner-staff thus came to be called the Jarjara.

That Natyaveda may be protected for ever and flourish in the future, Brahman ordered the greatest of Gods to provide protection and patronage. And in the Jarjara he posted the Vajra and in its Parvas he stationed.

Brahma, the Preserver of the Word and Chant,
Vishnu, the Enchanter with the Magic Flute
Shiva, the Embodiment of Cosmic Dance
Indra, the King of celestials and the Lord of
Apsaras,
Skanda, the Symbol of Youth and the Destroyer
of Demons.

And the Flag of Entertainment has ever since been
flying high for the delight of all.

Shanmukha

Shanmukha, the six-faced Lord, familiarly known as Lord Subrahmanya is the symbol of youth and resurgence, the saviour of mankind, the embodiment of knowledge and wisdom and a model of utter renunciation.

The worship of Lord Subrahmanya had an age-old tradition, testified to by Vedic literature and Tamil works, and is widespread, perhaps with greater concentration in South India. He is Lord Muruga to the Southerners and Kartikeya to the Northerners. There is no hamlet or village, one may say with confidence, in the South where there is no shrine dedicated to Lord Muruga. To the Tamils, he is the father of Tamil language and literature.

Lord Subrahmanya is known by several names, such as Skanda, Kumara, Kartikeya, Kanda, Muruga, Parvatinandana, Shadanana, Sharavana, Shanmukha, Shanmatura, Swaminatha, Sikhivahana, Mahasena, Kraunchadaarana, Vishaka etc., each having its own significance, based on legends and beliefs relating to birth, power, prowess etc. Yet, Subrahmanya is "suggestive of His Absoluteness, the one without a second, the Brahman or Supreme Being. He is also the fosterer of the Vedic tradition of Brahmanyam".

Lord Subrahmanya is fire incarnate, "being the 'seed' of Shiva carried by Agni and deposited in water in the forest of Reeds (Sharavanapoigai)", according to the Ramayana. Names, Skanda - Kartikeya appear in the Mahabharata at many places and His birth is attributed to Shiva and Svaaha in the form of Agni. Upanishads refer to Sanat Kumara as Skanda. Kalidasa's immortal work, *Kumarasambhava* delineates in detail with dramatic impact the birth and valour of Kumara, the son of Shiva and Parvati, born to annihilate the demon Taraka who oppressed the worlds. *Skanda Purana* brings in bold relief the birth and splendour of Skanda, the Shanmukha, more convincingly:

In answer to the gods' prayer to save them and the world from the clutches of the demon Surapadma, Lord Shiva, who only had bestowed on the demon the super power and a boon that none born of the union of man and woman could kill him, created Shanmukha from the six sparks which emanated from the central eye of his six faces Sadyojata, Vamadeva, Tatpurusha, Eesana,

Aghora and Adhomukha, ordering Agni and Vayu to carry and leave them in Ganga to be deposited by her in the Forest of Reeds called Sharavana at the foot of the Himalayas. From that forest rose Kumara or Muruga (Muruga in Tamil means beautiful) with faces representing Aiswarya (Overlordship), Virya (Potency for guidance), Yasas (sanctifying excellence), Sri (beauty of form and spirit), Jnana (Omniscience) and Vairagya (non-attachment in all cosmic activities)".

The six faces have also been said to symbolise the conquest of five sense organs and the mind and the six passions - Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya. Thus characterised, Kumara, was brought up by six Krithika mothers (born under the constellation Krithika) and acquired the name Kartikeya.

Once when Parvati gathered the child with overflowing love, the six heads became one. Hence Skanda (in Sanskrit 'one who emerged') and Kanda (in Tamil 'one whose heads are joined').

Kanchi Paramacharya, the Mahaswami had a more scientific description for the emergence of Lord Subrahmanya:

"The powerful lighting (of grace) born of the positive and negative charges of electricity, of power (Sakti) in the form of Shiva (positive) and Parvati (negative)."

Tirumurugaatrupadai, a great Tamil work, explains the significance of each face thus:

One face removes the darkness of ignorance, another responds to loving devotion; the third helps Brahmins in the performance of Vedic sacrifices; the fourth explains the meaning of difficult scriptural passages; the fifth shows ire against foes; the sixth rejoices in the company of 'Kura' Valli.

It was this magnificent Shanmukha who battled all evils, rent asunder by His arrow the mountain Krauncha, vanquished Surapadma in a battle of Virtue against evils and established His victory by cutting the Asura into two parts and making one a peacock, his Vahana and the other a cock, enshrined in His mast. The day of Surasamhara is celebrated with worshipful eclat as Skanda Shasti as it falls on Suklapaksha Shashti in the month of Ayyappasi.

The Lord acquires the name Vishaka for having born under the constellation of Vishaka. For his association with fire, Ganga and Saravana poigai, he became 'Agnigharban', 'Gangeya' and 'Sharavanabhava.' That he was a Senapathi par excellence needs no reiteration. He excelled as 'Tagappan Swami', or Swaminatha in the role of a "Gnana Pandita", teaching His father the essence of Omkara, the Pranava Mantra.

Lord Subrahmanya abides on hills unattached to the earth, and yet He points to the sky of eternity. Thousands of hills are his abode but only six are most significant and holy - called "Aaru Padaiveedu" in Tamil. These are Tirupparangunram, Tiruchendur, Tiruvavinankudi (Pazhani), Tiruveragam (Swamimalai), Kunrutoradal (Tiruttani and other hills) and Pazhamudircholai. The first Tirupparangunram is the holy place where His wedlock to Devayanai took place. Lord Muruga had two consorts, Devayanai and Valli - the embodiments of Ichcha Shakti and Gnana Shakti.

In Tiruchendur, on the sea-shore, the ever merciful Lord ensures his devotees of their ills being washed away as waves merging in the sea. It was here that He annihilated Surapadma. And in this shrine Adi Sankara composed his "Subrahmanya Bhujangam" (Bhujanga is the metre that glides like a serpent. Polagam Srirama Sastrigal refers to the worship of Kumara in the form of a serpent, as He lies at the Mooladhara Chakra as the coiled serpent power.) Pazhani, the third Padaiveedu, also known as Tiruvavinankudi, was the hilltop where Muruga rushed on His defeat to his elder brother Ganesha in the 'fruit episode'. But it is an abode where as Dandayudapani, He blesses his devotees. And it is here that Sage Agasthya learnt the grammar of Tamil language. Also the Lord blessed here Arunagirinadar whose *Tiruppugazh* is a monumental poetic work with musical grandeur revealing ennobling Bhakti, intricate rhythm and lyrical excellence.

Swamimalai (Tiruveragam) has its own aura upholding the Lord's role as His father's Guru. Kunruthoradal is a generic term denoting many a hill having holy shrines of Lord Subrahmanya. Tiruttani is prominent among them, known for its scenic beauty and quietitude. The placidity of the hill cooled him of his ire after vanquishing Surapadma. The shrine in Tiruttani is also a landmark in the history of Karnatic Music, for it is here that Muthuswami Dikshitar, one of the Music Trinity, had the divine grace, the Darshan of the Lord with his consorts and became a great Vaggeyakara.

In Pazhamudircholai, the sixth Padaiveedu, there is a Noopura Ganga, a perennial waterfall atop the hill.

There is a seventh Padaiveedu too-to Muruga, not with any geographical ambience but in the heart of his devotee, Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier, who sang in ecstatic trance of this in his Bilahari composition *Ninningun Arul Kaattum*, He sings :

*Orezhu Padaiveedu kondai - Vilangum
Un Arupadai Veedum en Ullamum serndaga.....*

Of the weapons Lord Subrahmanya wields, the most powerful is "Vel", (sword) which is also worshipped as Gnana Vel, Sakti Vel and Himself as "Velayuda". The sculpted image of Subrahmanya varies from place to place and in respect of His manifestations. The most common variety is six-faced Shadanana, Subrahmanya, with twelve hands wielding symbols and weapons of Sakti, arrow, sword, discus, noose and Abhaya on the right and cock, bow, shield, conch, plough and Varada on the left. He rides on the peacock and may have on either side of Him the attendants Jaya - Vijaya or his consorts Valli and Devayanai.

A fine stone sculpture of single-faced Kumara with four arms, riding on peacock and flanked by Valli and Devayanai can be seen in Samayapuram. A sketch from Chidambaram presents Skanda with three visible faces, ten arms, on peacock and fighting with giants, probably Taraka and his retinue. In four of His right hands can be seen sword, axe, arrow and club while the fifth is of a gesture wielding the bow. The upper most of the left arms shows the Vismaya posture, the rest shield, bow, noose and bell.

The Kasyapa-Silpa lays down that the image of Skanda may be of six faces or only one and with two, four, six or twelve hands. The symbols are generally the Sakti, arrow, sword, discus, noose, peacock's feathers, shield, bow, plough, rosary and Abhaya and Varada Hastas.

In the worship of Lord Subrahmanya, Music has played a great part. Devotees have gone ecstatic over singing in praise of His magnificence, munificence, splendour, compassion etc. Hailed as a Kaliyugavaradan, the saviour of the universe from Kaliyuga, He has been propitiated in sacred hymns, verses, literature, in songs as simple as folk genre and as grand and traditional as Krits, Padams etc. Some of the ancient Tamil texts of Sangham era,

"Pathuppattu, Ettuthogai, Tirumurugatruppada", go at length to describe the 'Leela' of the Lord. Arunagirinadar's *Tiruppugazh* of 15th century is a wholesome "musical treatise" on Lord's Leela. *Kandaralankaram*, *Kandaranubhuti*, Kachiyappa Sivachariar's *Kandapuramam*, *Shashti Kavacham*, *Shanmukha Kavacham* are some very popular among the Lord's devotionals.

Among the Music Trinity Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar has composed numerous Krits on Lord Subrahmanya. He composed a set of nine special Krits on the Lord at Tiruttani. Before him Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier showered his "Pamalai" on him. Koteeswara Iyer dedicated an entire-set of compositions in 72 Melakarta

Ragas plus some more as *Kanda Ganam*. More recently Papanasam Sivan left a rich legacy of Krits on Lord Muruga in exquisite Tamil. Besides there have been numerous 'Padams' composed by devotees which adore the dance forum. There is hardly any form of composition in the South which has not touched upon the Lord's "Leela" as the theme.

It is Lord Shanmukha, one without a second, the embodiment of knowledge and wisdom and a symbol of youth and resurgence who is the presiding deity of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Mumbai. And let us enshrine Him in our hearts, singing with Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier, as the seventh Padaiveedu.

- Sulochana Rajendran

Composition on Seventh Padaiveedu

Composer : Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier

Raga : Bilahari

Tala : Adi

Pallavi

*Ninningun Arul Kaattum Sol Onru Sonnaalum /
Nenjam Kuzhaindide Neelamayilerum Velan //*
(Enningun)

Anupallavi

Enrenrum Natamaadum Iraivan Taru Kumara /

Madhyamakala Sahitya

*Imayam Taazhginra Pugazh Vadi Vela
Ediriya ninra Niruda Kulakaala Velan //* (Enningun)

Charanam

*Orezhu Padaiveedu Kondai (Muruga) - Vilangum /
Un Arupadai Veedum En Ullamum Serndaaga //
Eerezhulagum pani kondai - Eninum
Engal Tamizh Valli Edir munne Veezhndai !!
Kaarmukil pol vilangum Maal maruga Muruga /*

Madhyamakala Sahitya

*Kaninda manadula Adiyavar Sirakka
Siranda Arul nirai mugattavaa //
Serinda Niramuru Mayilmisai Vilangum
Mananda Iruvarum Anaitthavaa /
Kadamba Malar Kamalamodu Veguvidam
Anindu paranda Bhuyaththavaa /
Karunai Mazhai pozhium Kanda Kumara Gurupara
Mukunda maruga Muruga ena Niraindu //* (Ninningun)

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Visit of the Sankaracharyas of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham



Sankaracharyas

"Jaya Jaya Sankara, Hara Hara Sankara", from Navi Mumbai to Napean Sea Road the solemn strains filled the air for over a period of two months (Feb-March, 2000) when their Holiness Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal and Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati Swamigal graced the metropolis.

Kumbhabhisheka, Kanakabhisheka, Swarna Mantapa Pratishtha, Samrajya Pattabhisheka, Sahasra Kalasa Puja, Homa, Yagna, Deepa Puja, visits to cultural, educational, industrial, social organisations, and individual homes - their itinerary was endless.

All through they showered their blessings, gave Anugraha Bhashana and preached the lesson of peace, brotherhood and Bhakti Marga. Can there be a better Marga than Music?

When they graced the renovated Shanmukhananda Hall (on Feb 14, 2000) the students of the Sangeetha Vidyalaya presented Paramacharya's Benediction of Universal Brotherhood, harmony and peace - "Maithrim Bhajata" in a tri-lingual (Sanskrit, Tamil and Marathi) rendition.



Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya students rendering "Maithrim Bhajata".

Bharata Natya As Portrayed in Paintings and Sculpture

By Dr. R. Nagaswamy

That dance was well codified and assumed a highly classical form in the Tamil country before the Christian era (over 2000 years ago) is evidenced by innumerable references in the Sangam classics. Among the celebrated seven donors (*Kadai Elu Vallals*), Valvil Ori of Kolli hills was included as one of the "liberal donors seven" because of his patronage to dancers and musicians. He himself was a great connoisseur, who listened to a Varnam sung by a Pana and Virali, rendered in 21 *Tanas* (called *Turais*), (*Purananuru* 152). This valuable information is furnished by the poet Van Pamar. This highly developed art of the age, however, has not survived in any visual representation, whether in painting, sculpture or bronze, assignable to the Sangam age.

All-Women Fare

However, the classical form of dance is luckily well illustrated in the bordering areas of the Tamil land, at places like Amaravati in Andhra. The Buddha Chaitya, called the Mahachaitya, at Amaravati, and which came into existence in the times of Asoka, and embellished with sculptures from 3rd century B.C. to 2nd century A. D., portray a number of dancing scenes, both solo and group dances, specially by women. (Pic. 1)



A dance panel from the Buddhist Chaitya, Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh, now in the British Museum

The Angaharas, Charis, Hastas, and the grouping pattern as depicted in these panels are remarkable. For example, a panel depicting four dancing girls, in the scene of Mallas of Kusinagara, deliberating to distribute the relics of Buddha to eight directions. The pattern and the rhythmic balance, depicted by the four dancers, would leave no

one in doubt about the highly classical form of Natya obviously based on Bharata's *Natya Sastra*. The panel found on coping slab, with inscription, assignable to 1st - 2nd century A.D. is now preserved in the Madras Government Museum. It is perhaps the best illustration among the early portrayals of group dance in Indian sculpture. Another panel, also from Amaravati, now in the British Museum, London, depict a lovely solo dancer performing dance in the presence of royal ladies. In both the instances the dance performed is the '*asya*' form and may be seen in the suppleness of the limbs, and bodily pose. Another point of interest worthy of note is that all the accompanying musicians are women, playing on flute, two harps, Idakka and cymbals. The vocal music is also provided by women. It may also be noted that the place of Mridanga is taken by Idakka. The Buddhist sculptures of Amaravati provide a mine of information on the nature of dance in the beginning of the Christian era. The succeeding period is illustrated by the sculptures of Nagarjunakonda in Andhra region.

A Landmark

The Nagarjunakonda age corresponds to the age of *Silappadhikaram* in Tamil Nadu. It is needless to state that *Silappadhikaram* furnishes the best of data on dance in the chapter on "Arangetru Kadai" in the beginning of the 3rd century A.D. This period is a landmark in the history of Indian dance, for the earliest composition of "Jati" for dance composed by Vannaka Sattan, son of Devan and inscribed on stone, is assignable to this period, and it is found on a rock-bed in Tamil Nadu in a place called Aranattarmalai, near Erode in Coimbatore District. There are two compositions of "Sollukkattus", inscribed in Tamil Brahmi script, assignable to this age, which are the earliest compositions found in whole of India, intended for dance. Unfortunately no sculpture or painting illustrative of this age has come down in Tamil Nadu.

A remarkable group of sculpture, found in the Tantonri Isvara temple, Kanchipuram, assignable to the 5th century A. D. are in the tradition of late Nagarjunakonda school. They represent, both men and women in different dance poses. That they are distinctly dance panels, may be seen from the manner of depiction. In a number of cases the dancers are seen holding scarfs and dancing.

In some panels only women are seen dancing while in others both men and women as couples, dance. However, it would be difficult to say whether the dances depicted are classical forms or folk, being in all probability the latter, though the dividing line between classical and folk forms could never be strictly defined.

Science of Dance

The 7th century is the age of Bhakti movement, spearheaded by Saivite Nayanmars and Vaishnavite Alvars. Pointed references are found to dancing girls of great beauty performing dance in the temples during daily rites and annual festivals. It is the period the great Pallava Emperor, Mahendravarman I, the outstanding artist of

Incidentally, it is the earliest musical composition-a veritable treatise, found in India, inscribed on walls.

The beginning of the 8th century saw the construction of the Kailasanatha temple, also known as Rajasimheswara temple, Kanchi. (Pic. 2) The remarkable sculptures of Siva in his vibrant form of dance, the *Samhara Tandava* and the competition between Kali and Siva are portrayed in sculptural forms on the walls of the temple. The beautiful forms beneath a thick coat of lime plaster are now emanating in the true forms and illustration after the removal of the ugly plaster. The verve and vigour with which dance was performed in the court of its builder Rajasimha is seen here. At the backwall of the sanctum



(Pic. 2) An exquisite sculpture of Siva's dance witnessed by Parvati in the Kailasanatha temple, Kanchi.

music and dance and the inventor of Sankiranjati-composer of the two dance dramas - *Mattavilasa Prahasana* and *Bhagavadajjuga*. In the introductory sloka of the *Mattavilasa Prahasana*, the entire science of dance is vividly portrayed. Though a number of Mahendra's cave temples are known, surprisingly no sculpture of dance is seen. Maybe there were paintings which have disappeared!

It is of interest to state that during this period the long inscription of musical composition composed by Paramamaheswara, Gunasena was inscribed on the stone walls of the rock-cut caves at Kudimiyamalai and Thirumeyyam in Pudukkottai district, Tamilnadu.

is found a sculpture of Siva, performing *Urdhva Tandava* and by his side is shown Nandikeswara, also dancing, with his legs in *Swastika* form. This important representation, Nandikeswara learning dance from Siva, could take the history of the Nandikeswara school of dance to 700 A.D. The famous *Abhinayadarpana* of Nandikeswara should be recalled in this connection, though the composition of the work is still a matter of conjecture.

The famous group of temples and sculptures at Mamallapuram also were carved by Rajasimha, who had the other title Mamalla. One of the important inscriptions at Mamallapuram refers to Sage Bharata.

A sculpture on the wall of the Dharmarajaratha, the great monolith, shows Siva teaching dance to Sage Tandu, which is a Bharatan tradition. The reference to sage Bharata and also the science of dance taught to Tandu should be viewed in the continuing tradition of Bharata Natyam in the South. Again, the portrayal of Siva teaching Tandu dance is perhaps the earliest representation of the theme in India known so far.

'Bhava' in Fresco

In the South, the Pandyas were rulers with their capital at Madurai, in the later half of the 8th century. A cave temple was excavated at Thirupparankundram by a minister to the Pandyan emperor, wherein Siva performing *Chatur Tandava* accompanied in dance by Sapta Matas, is found carved. It is a representation of the Pandyan art. In sculptural and epigraphical representation Sapta Matas accompanying Siva in his dance are frequently referred to.

The best illustration of dancing girl, with full of Bhavas is found on the pillar of the excavated cave at Sittannavasal. (Pic. 3).



(Pic. 3). Painting of a dancing girl found on the pillar of the excavated cave at Sittannavasal, Pudukkottai district. Pandya period, 9th Century A.D.

The fresco executed under the orders of the Jaina Saint, Ilam Goutaman, in the reign of Pandya Srimara Srivallabha (9th century) would show that the Jains were not lagging behind in extending patronage to dance. Known for its sinuous lines, sober colour and graceful delineation, the fresco, though partially damaged,

illustrates emphasis on facial expression in dance and the supremely delightful hairdo of the age.

The Great Age

The 10th century witnessed the great temple building activity ushered in by the Imperial Cholas, mainly by Aditya Chola and Parantaka. The temples, though moderate in size, house elegant sculptures and in many cases, as in the temples of Nageswara at Kumbakonam, Koranganatha at Srivivasanallur and Siva at Pilla Mangai, the sculptors had mastered the portrayal of feminine form and had carved some of the most outstanding sculptures of dance found as bracket figures and Chowri bearers. A fine panel of a dancer accompanied by musicians from Thirucchinnampoondi, now housed in the Rajarajan Museum, Tanjavur is the best illustration of a dancing girl of the 10th century A. D.

When we move on to the beginning of the 11th century, we are in the greatest age in the history of dance. History is created in the Great Temple at Tanjavur, built by Rajaraja, the Great. Built around 1010 A.D., the temple stands significant for the history of dance in many ways. The inscriptions on the temple record the endowment made by Rajaraja for 400 dancing girls and nearly 64 accompanying musicians, who were to perform dance in the temple, daily, as part of Nityapooja. The record also indicates several great centres of dance in Tamil Nadu from where these dancing girls came to Tanjavur.



(Pic. 4) Sculpture of Natarajini Tandavamurthy in the Great Temple of Gangai Konda Cholapuram of the age of Rajendra Chola, 11th Century A.D.

Such a large number of dancing girls performing in the temple should be viewed against the philosophical background that went into the construction of the temple. The supreme deity Rajarajeswara, enshrined in the sanctum, was visualised as the *Paramananda Tandavamurthi*, performing dance in the supreme Akasa (the Paramakasa). (Pic. 4)

It is to emphasize this aspect of cosmic dance in the supreme space, the 108 dance Karanas (as expounded by Bharata in his *Natya Sastra*) being performed by Lord Siva Himself are portrayed on the walls around the Garbagraha in the first floor.

According to historians of dance, the 108 Karanas portrayed in sculpture and as systematised by Bharata are the earliest representations in visual form, of the fourth chapter of Bharata's *Natya Sastra*. Though a few Karanas have not been completed, the importance given to dance Karanas, around the sanctum, would show that dance was as dear to the Supreme as the ritual and philosophy. The third and equally important aspect, to be noticed in the Great Temple of Tanjavur, are the fresco paintings of the age of Rajaraja, where the Bharata Natya tradition is figured in delightful forms specially in the history of Sundaramurthy Nayanar. The costumes, the eyelashes, the single and group recitals performed by girls illustrate the height reached by the art of dance. (Pic.5)



(Pic. 5) Fresco of a dancing girl found in the Brhadisvara temple, Tanjore of the age of Rajaraja Chola, 1000 A.D.

The 12th century witnessed the building of Gopuras on all the four sides of the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram. In the Gopuras are portrayed the 108 forms

of dance. In the Eastern and Western Gopuras the dance panels have the corresponding verses from Bharata's *Natya Sastra* inscribed beneath each. It is veritably the fourth chapter of the *Natya Sastra* recorded in both verses and visual form. In addition, the long enclosure around the Sivakamiamman shrine portrays on its base remarkable representation of Rudra Ganikas performing dance to the accompaniment of music. They clearly indicate the role of dance in the temple and its overwhelming influence on the religious life of the people. It should also be remembered that another series of 108 dance Karanas performed by Siva, originally in a Siva temple built in the 12th century Chola period, have found their way to the Sarangapani temple at Kumbakonam where they are now seen in the Gopura. (Pic. 6 & 7)



An inscribed dance Karana on the Gopura of the Sarangapani temple Kumbakonam, Chola period, 12th century A.D. (Pic.6)



Dance Karanas found embedded in a wall of Kumbeshwara temple, Kumbakonam, Chola period, 12th century A.D. (Pic.7)

Each Karana is not only labelled but also numbered. Though brought from a different temple and built into the Gopura nearly 500 years later, the builders have taken care to arrange them in a sequence, indicating their understanding of the science.

The 13th century representation could be seen in the Siva temple at Tribuvanam built by the Chola King Kulottunga III. Also the Pallava Chieftain Kopperunchinga, who called himself '*Bharatam Vallan*' had left dance sculptural representations in the temples he constructed at Sendamangalam.

The 14th and 15th centuries witnessed the violent incursion of alien faith that disturbed the rhythm and orderly life and growth of the native arts. How this disturbed and how far the art managed to survive is yet to be studied critically.

Revival of Arts

The beginning of the 16th century saw one of the greatest rulers of India, Krishnadevaraya, the Vijayanagara Emperor (1509 to 1529). The great building activity like the tall Gopuras erected at places like Kalahasti, Thiruvannamalai, and Kanchipuram, the literary and musical efflorescences, ushered in by the great ruler saw the revival of the delicate art of dance. The foreign travellers' accounts testify to the personal supervision and encouragement given by Krishnadevaraya to the art of dance. Thiruvannamalai Gopura built by him and the 1000-pillared hall in the same place carry sculpture of women dancing. Towards the end of his reign, three great Nayak dynasties rose in Tamil Nadu - Tanjavur, Madurai and the Gingee principalities. They extended the same patronage as the Imperial House. But a careful study reveal that the Tanjore Nayaks were the foremost to extend their support and personal inspiration to dance and music.



(Pic.8) A dancer with elaborate headgear resembling modern Kathakali, Yakshagana headgear, Nayak period from Thirunelveli, 17th century.

The Nayaks of Madurai and Ginjee, it may be said, did not seem to have so actively involved themselves encouraging dance forms though we do have some reference to the famous Thirumalai Nayak entertaining his visitors to dance in his Natakasala. It also accounts for the less number of dance panels found in the temple structures built by these rulers. Interestingly, the elaborate dance headgear as worn by modern Kathakali dancers and Yakshagana exponents are found figured in sculptures of this age in Madurai and Tirunelveli region assignable to 16th-17th centuries. (Pic. 8)

The gradual incoming of Mogul tradition assimilated both in music and dance, as in other fields, is clearly reflected in the 18th century portrayals. In Tanjavur the Marathas had established themselves around 1675 and brought in the Deccani traditions which flowered side by side with the regional art. This was also followed up by the other principalities like Ramnad where, in the 18th century, the *Salam* and the *Hindustani* or *Deccani* dance tradition are seen by the side of the local tradition in the mural paintings of the Ramnad palace executed during the reign of Vijaya Raghunatha Sethupati around 1725.



Two dancing girls performing dance in the presence of Vijaya Raghunatha Sethupati. Early 18th century Mural painting on the walls of Ramalinga Vilasam, Ramanathapuram. (Pic.9)

We have indicated in the above paragraphs that enough visual representations of dance forms are available both in the sculptural and mural traditions. A study combined with the literary tradition of the respective periods, would give a greater insight into the art of dance and its evolution.

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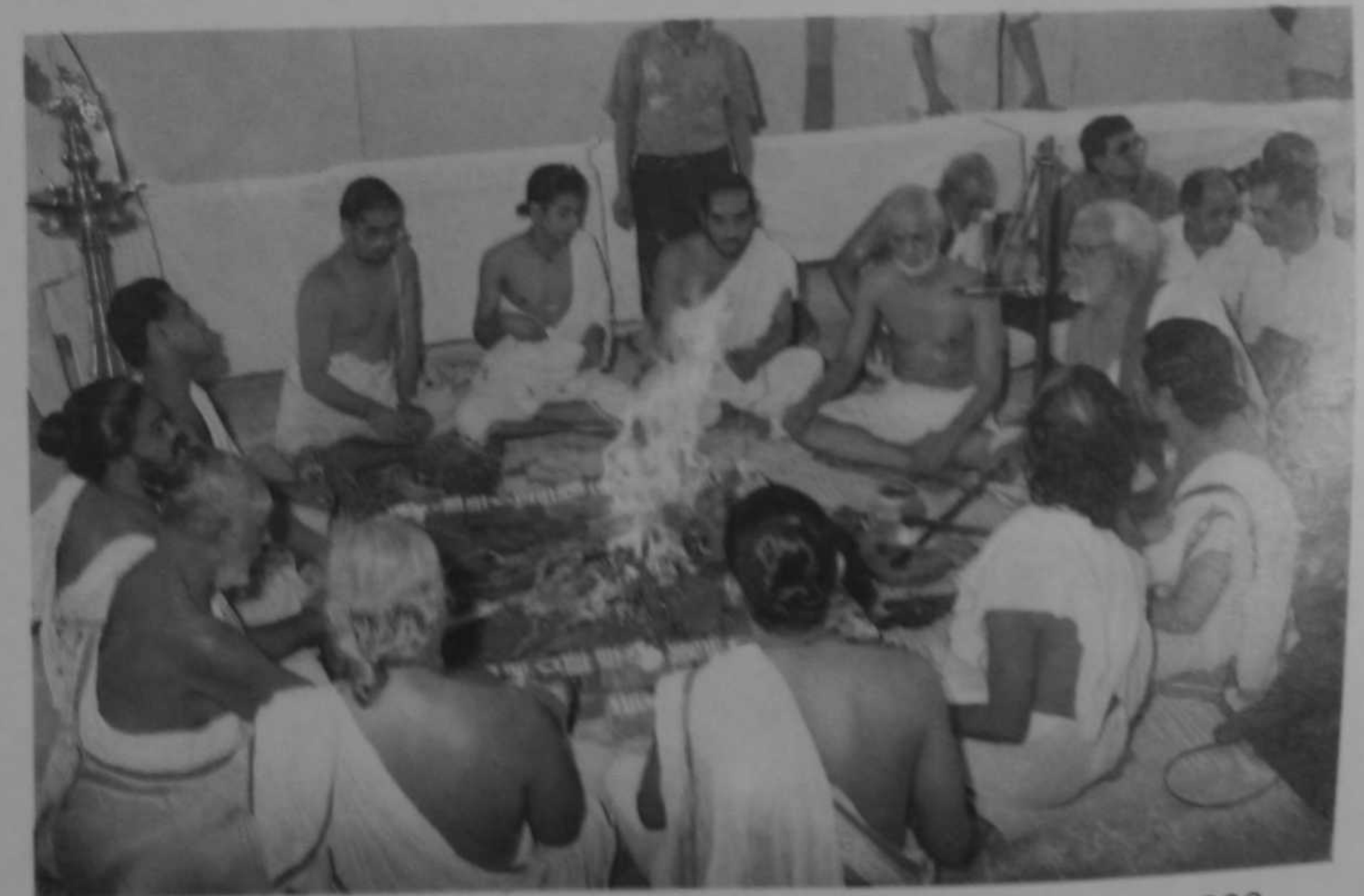
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From the Archives**Tyagaraja - His Philosophy of Devotional Music**

(What is Saint Tyagaraja's role in Music? Was he a poet, spiritual thinker, philosopher, mystic, Bhakta, or Saint? These find an answer in the ennobling thesis below, contributed to "The Indian Fine Arts Society Festival Souvenir" more than two decades ago marking the Saint's bi-centenary celebrations.)

I was doubtful whether after what Professor V. Raghavan had contributed to a full understanding of the personality and works including his philosophy, in his excellent Introduction to the *Spiritual Heritage of Tyagaraja*, I could do anything more. Especially when I was expected to do something that does full justice to the Saint. I do not know whether anyone could do full justice to that great composer who was a supreme example of a Bhakta. However, as one who had felt a duty to a Bhakta and having also talked on him once or twice, I tried to put down my thoughts. My procedure has been to start with the purpose which motivated the Saint's taking to this Sangita-Yoga and then to point out how having selected the path of Bhakti-Dhyana he found Sangita developed Dhyana in a pleasant and ordinary way though this too demanded the technical know-how of musical compositions devoted to Divine union. His own experience of the ritual chanting of real musical hymns turned him away from that route of ritual non-music or just chant. Therefore his assiduous cultivation of Sangita with Sahitya blended in a neat alchemy of other disciplines. But Godhead has been found to be needed to help in the realisation of union, and this he found in Sri Rama who was also the object of adoration and union by Valmiki and Narada and later by other Bhagavatas, even those belonging to the philosophical schools.

Inner Artistic Demand

Thus Tyagaraja's philosophy embraces the Purushartha, the Hita and the Tattva, the Tattva having been discovered by the real and appropriate means or Pramana of Svanubhava arising as vision during the ecstatic raptures of song. This divine culmination is undoubtedly a result of divine grace. As in everything mere technique or technical skill is not enough to bring about spiritual union. Much subtler soul-songs are needed than the gross techniques and no wonder we do not have as many saints of song as we may pray for or wish.

I am supremely grateful for this essay into Saint Tyagaraja's works again after several years when I was much engrossed in other types of Yoga.

It is not usual to try to assess the philosophy of an artist or musician or of his religion. A musician or poet does not attempt to set out a neat logical system of ideas in his works. He does not seem to attempt to lay down his system of beliefs even by which his music or poetry is being governed or his compositions regulated. There are many who would refuse to state their musical premises or artistic rules. They seem to claim a kind of liberty for their outpourings or creative expression or experience. Their immanency or self-regulation makes their compositions almost unclassifiable.

There are however quite a large number of composers of poetry or music who seem to express the climate of their social norms but with a special genius to bring out the best of the same. Artists as a rule live for their perfect art and no philosophy or religious code is considered to be sacrosanct other than inner artistic demand. In this sense we know that they set at naught all previous rules and in fact their grand manner refuses to conform to all rigid patterns that they or their social milieu has inherited.

This freedom of their spiritual make-up has been at the back of their supreme individuality and their immense influence. Their spiritual nature has broken through the crusts of past and has blown a new intuitive breeze which has let in fresh air into a sophisticated atmosphere that perhaps has made the past seem stuffy and oppressively perfect.

Therefore to write on the philosophy of a musician and poet who sought more the Reality than the form whilst the master technician had been shaping the form to mould itself in the frame of Realty, is rather too onerous a task. It means nothing less than to mould oneself in the form and Reality of that which had informed and inspired the Seer Musician. This none can obviously claim to do successfully, much less a technical philosopher whose terms and jargon would be found to be lacking this quality of moulding.

Saint Tyagaraja has been acclaimed to be one of the foremost seers of the Personal Godhead. He is said

to have been initiated by no less a personality than the hoary saint Narada¹ - the Orpheus of Indian mythology, who taught him the Goal, the Means and the Godhead, the Liberation, Music of Devotion, and Sri Ramachandra.

Art and Divine Worship

That art is for worship of the Divine was almost the primal concept of art. Art was celebrated as a sacred work and that meant that art was an instrument or means for experiencing the Divine and moulding oneself in such a manner as to attain inward union and peace. Sculpture had this liberating purpose-it was a spiritual movement towards attaining *Sarupya* with God. Music sung to experience the Divine Nature or express the glory of God is also capable of bringing about the *Sarupya*. As he put it *Sangita jnanamu sarupya saukhyadame manasa*. All art of this nature which is restricted to escalating the experience of the form of God will bring about *Sarupya Moksha* or *Siddhi*. As it is well known there are stages of *Mukti*, *Sannidhya*² (presence), *Samipya* (nearness), *Sarupya* (same form), *Salokya* (same vision or plane) and *Sayujya* (Union with the Divine). It is a clear that Sri Tyagaraja holds that the art of music leads to *Sarupya Moksha*. To gain the same form of God is undoubtedly a great achievement. It is a great question for mystic philosophy whether one can rest with it or proceed deeper to the level of union with God (*Sayujya*).

Man is undoubtedly in a world of sorrow and to get out of it is freedom from it. As a follower of the Vedas and the Upanishads Tyagaraja finds that *Moksha* is the goal of all beings, and to attain *Moksha* even whilst alive here is essential. To become a *Jivanmukta* is the essential first step. Thus he holds that without attaining *Jivanmukti* one cannot attain *Mukti* that is final. His song : *Mokshamukalada jivanmuktulu gani variki?* illustrates his belief in *Jivanmukti*. In another song he says "Gitadyakhilopanisd sarabhuta jivanmuktudautuku akasa-sariramu Brahmane atmaramuni....."

But this *Jivanmukti* means the freedom from all the raga of the world, all attachments to the world and constant remembrance of God who is known as the Supreme, whose body is the Sky (Akasa) and who is essential Cinmaya consciousness. What the worldly people call as Cinmaya is really the Brahman who has the Akasa as His body. The source of all sound is Akasa, for sound is the quality of Akasa. If our sounds arise from the Akasa that

is limited, the supreme sound Sabda-Brahman) arises on issues from the Brahmic Akasa. Thus Sangita which is having its source in it is capable of granting *Moksha-Sangitamu mokshadamani*. Thus the aspiration for any philosophy lies in its power or practical utility in granting liberation from Samsara, in removing the impediments to the realisation of God.

Role of Song

Song has been discovered by the ancient seers as that which grants freedom, and indeed all real song reveals the Reality when it is used as a means to see and feel Reality, its touch is something sublime and sublimating. In this sense Sangita or Music becomes a sort of communion or yoga.

This music when divine is capable of granting the triple benefits of Yoga (union with God), Tyaga (detachment of the world and Bhoga (enjoyment of the Divine in all things)- *Ragasudharasa-panamu jesi ranjillave O manasa*. Therefore he finds it the way of enjoyment that is also the way of liberation. Though some seers have claimed that the greatest of our thoughts or poetry is clothed in saddest thought, it is the view of the great Saint, Tyagaraja, following Narada and other eminent Hymnists, that the greatest poetry and music are those which express their enjoyment of the Divine Form and Nature when their enjoyment leads to their emancipation here and now as well as fulfilment beyond. Not all learning will grant us intelligence -not all banditry will help us to attain liberation.

Saint Tyagaraja realises that as is true with the other paths of Yoga, there is need for a Guru³ -without whom there is hardly any possibility of attaining the mastery of the path of union with God. Without listening to the teachings of the Guru even the best of intellects of virtuous ones cannot attain the goal of self-realisation or proficiency in any art or science. However, it is necessary to have a competent Guru. (*Guruleka etuvanti gunikini teliyaka bodu*). Such a competent Guru must be able to teach the method of song and train his disciple towards perfection. Training in the art of song is very important just as training in any other system of Yoga. Yoga is both a science and an art and therefore all and sundry cannot undertake the task of training and education for becoming an adept. Tyagaraja has many compositions where he speaks about the knowledge necessary regarding the Tala, Laya and Sahitya for a proper practice of the Yoga of Sangita. *Nadopasana* is indeed very important. There

are some who consider that *Svara Sastra* is a science of breath or *Svasa-Sastra*. This must be distinguished from the *Nada* or the *Sabda* which arises from the primeval *Pranava*, *Omkara*, - it is the Breath of breaths which is the Word of words. A philosophy of Union must be steady in the technique.

The mind is expected to become steady. It must attain peace. It must become *Satta-Citta*, getting rid of *Tamasa*, dark and idling condition, and it must be devoid of *Rajas* and become desireless for everything other than the One Supreme Reality. That Reality must be the abode of the *Dharma*. What is the path to that except *Dhyana*-steady and continuous or uninterrupted meditation on that Ultimate Reality, which is lovingly described as the *Mahapurushaprema*. Devotion to the Ultimate Personality or God is that which grants pleasant remembrance, which increases mental tranquillity. As he has beautifully put it ;

Santamuleka saukhyamu ledu

Even though there be wealth, wife and children,
even though there be wealth of Japa, Tapa,
even though one has mastered Agama, Sastras
all and knew their heart-doctrine,

Even though one has performed well the Yagas and
Karmas

Even though they get name as Bhagavatas (godly
ones)

Yet if there is no Santi (peace) for him there is no
Happiness - (*Saukhyam*).

This peace can come only through *Dhyana* of the form of love for the Ultimate Personality of God. This is the essential core of *Bhakti-Yoga*. *Dhyaname Gangasnanamu* exclaims Tyagaraja which induces the peace that passeth our understanding. In his song *Sukhi evvaro* he reiterates his conception of true happiness⁴

Basis of Dhyana

Dhyana has been explained by *Dhyana-Yogins* as well as *Bhakti-Yogins* as *Dhruvanu-Smarana*-steady or constant remembrance; "*Smarane sukhamu*" and he holds that *Rama-nama* is the best for remembrance. This is the development of *Bhakti* as *Nama Siddhanta*.

Smarane sukhamu Ramanama
Varudai buttinanduku Nama Smarane sukhamu
Vara-rajayoganistulau-varikanandam andettatu
Ramanama sravanamuvalla Ramanamame
hradayamu-nindi

Premabuttaceyagaleda
Niskama Thyagaraju jeyu nama smarane sukhamu;

4. *Sukhi evvar Rama namasukhi evvaro sumukhi evvaro*
Satyamu tappaka sakala lokulaku brtyudai daiva bedhamuleka
Nityamaina susvaramuganamuto niranteramu Tyagarajanuta
(The happy man is one who is well-disposed, eleaving to Truth, serving the people without entertaining distinctions between gods, and singing melodiously the eternal songs unceasingly.)

(The Happiness that is attained in the heart by the *Rajayogins* who follow the path of *Dhyana* is verily that which is attained by the *Bhakti-yogi* whose heart is filled with the Name of God and produces love for the Ultimate Being.)

Para-Tattva

The great Saint realises that all learning and other religious practices which inculcate yagas etc., only make men goats of sacrifice-herein echoing the words of the Sage *Yajnavalkya-pasureva sa devatanam*. The trenchant criticism of men who make themselves just animals of the Gods. He himself has done all these praises of men for getting rid of the triple miseries till he discovered that *Rama* is the Ultimate *Tattva* which can release one from the triple miseries-*Adhi-daiva*, *Adhyatma* and *Adhibhuta*. The fundamental means or the Ultimate means to save man is the knowledge of the Ultimate Person who can save-this has been known as the *Para-tattva* not what philosophy knows by it as the most abstract ground of all existence.

The Divine in fact incarnated as *Sri Rama* and other *Avataras* just because people have been confused by the practices to which they had been led by the earlier doctrines

O mind! why dost thou not listen to me
who will tell thee all the secret truths.

.....When those who had adopted the practices
of the *Karma-Kanda* (Yagas and yagnas) and went on
acquiring the sorrowful worlds and got tired.

He who descended amongst men is verily the Divine
who has to be adored.

Manavyalakincardate
Marma mella delpedane Manasa.

The uttering of His name alone can be the means
to happiness.

Speaking about that Divine Descent as the descent
of the Ultimate Reality he speaks the language of supreme
spiritual understanding embedded in the *Upanisad-*
mahavakya (Tattvam asi)

Tattvam eruga tarama paratattvam eruga
trama. tattvam asi yane vakyarthamu Rama nivanu
paratattvam eruga tarama.
Tamasa rajasa gunamula....

Is it possible to realise the truth?

Is it possible to realise the great truth that you are the
meaning of the great affirmation "That Thou Art."

1. In his song "*Satgurusvamiki....*" He mentions one *Srinivasa* who is *Vasudeva's* son as his Guru
2. Saint Tyagaraja sings of *Sannidhya* many times, cf, Asking whether *Dwaitamu Sukhama*, *Advaitamu Sukhama*? *Ramuni Sannidhyame Sukhamu*, he answers. In his song "*Nidhichala Sukhama*"-he answers that *Ramuni Sannidhi seva* is *Sukha*.
3. Tyagaraja has in a song "*Nichittamu niralamu nischalamani* stated "*Guruvu cillaginju, Guruve Brahmaramu, Gurude Bhaskarudu, Gurude Bhadrudu, Gurude Yukamagati.*"

Is it possible for one so long as one is caught up in the struggle with Tamasa and Rajasa Gunas to realise the truth of the Vedas and Sastras? (C. Ramanujachari's translation).

Here we have one of those interpretations of the Vedic Mahavakya in line with the deepest mystical insights not to be explained by the intellect.

Having the experiences of the world as false in my youth, says Tyagaraja, and having seen men who had studied the divisive vadas (systems of philosophy) of the Veda, Sastra, and Purana, and without emancipating themselves from illusion, and having seen men who for the sake of Bhoga (experience) running after the kings who perform sacrifices and tired, I have in this life-time discerned that they cannot enjoy without making Thee their king! Here he has found that the most important thing is to get to reconcile oneself to the constant remembrance of God through song, that is loving, enlightened and sweet in technique as well as in emotion.

Tyagaraja hardly believed in Moodha Bhakti, on any God. He was praying for that discernment which will choose to worship the One Supreme Being who combines the best features of the several Gods.

Evarani nimayincirira ninnetlu aradhincirira

Suguna and Nityarupa

"In what manner have they determined Thy Nature or personality, as Siva or Madhava or Brahma or Parabrahma?" He directly essays to determine the Ultimate Personality of God. For the saint there was hardly any doubt that whatever may be He in his own nature as Nirguna, He was Suguna⁵ in respect of the devotee, and has to be adored as such in order to get His love in order that one might freely love a responsive being.

The philosophical disquisition as to the nature of the Absolute Reality has no relevance to the person who seeks to know that personality who can save him. Such a divine being has a permanent or eternal form-Nitya Rupa. In his famous song *Nityarupa evari pandityamemi naducura?* he has expressed himself firmly that though He is Nirguna-beyond all gunas yet He has Sugunas-excellent auspicious qualities which are eternal to Him. His theism has overcome the abstract conceptions because these are indeed the way of deliverance. "My Yoga lies in having anuraga for thee, *yogamu nipai anuragamu padeda vere gati evaru....*"

The knowledge he prays for in the exquisite song *Jnanamosagarada* he has stated what has happened

⁵ Ninne nammi nanu ra O Rama Raghavayya...."

⁶ He uses the word Suguna nor Saguna, intimating that God has infinite worshippable qualities, the Bhagavad Sadagunas.

to him :

Jnanamosagarada Garudagamana vada
Ni namamuce na madi nirmalamainadi
Paramatmudu jivatmudu
Padunalugu lokamulu narakinnara kimpurushalu
Naradadi munulu
Paripurna ! niskalamka ! niravadhi-
-sukhadayaka ! Vara Thyagarajarcita ! varamu
Tanane jnanamosagarada ?

"Oh Perfect One ! Oh the immaculate ! Oh the giver of perennial supreme bliss. Now that my mind has been purified by the chanting of your holy name, can't you bless me with the divine wisdom which will enable me to realise that I am myself Paramatma, Jivatma, the fourteen worlds, and the species of inhabitants thereof and sages like Narada." (C. Ramanujachari's translation).

This experience of the Oneness of all existence, both or all the transcendent and immanent, chit and achit, is an experience sought after in the Upanishads-as *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*.

His own problem is what it is for most Advaitins whether Dvaita grants happiness or Advaita grants happiness.

"Dvaitamu sukhama advaitamu sukhama...."

Preference to Dasa Relationship

God indeed alone can clear this doubt, for He is the Personality in all, sporting in it as their very self. The other song beginning with *'Edari sancharintura'* (which path shall I follow?) reveals his preference to the Dasa relation even if that means one has to be a Dvaitin. Born though in the family of those who professed Advaita, he found that the path of Bhakti which he had adopted for securing his deliverance entailed his treading the path of Dvaita-Bhava, his difference from the Lord on whom he depends utterly.

His own song reveals his vision of the Divine Lord everywhere:

*"Endendu jucina endendu balikina
nenendendu sevincina endendu pujinchina
andandu nivani tocetanduku
padaravindamu dhyaninchinadendendukani...."*

This reveals his ardent desire to see the Lord everywhere-the One Being who is indwelling all, omnipresent deity. This latter concept is nearer to the

conception of the One Divine in all-the One and only God who is in fact the self of all gods.

His aspiration to serve God-this one and only God or monotheism that does not deny the indwelling Oneness of the God in all realities is seen in his song

"Bantu riti koluvya vayya Rama"

"Pray vouchsafe to me that I may serve you as a true servant who has completely subjugated lust, arrogance, haughtiness and other evil qualities, a servant having the following insignia: Horripilated hair as the armour, the appellation Ramabhakta as the metal badge of the livery, Ramanama as the sword". (C. Ramanujachari's translations)

The goal of most Bhaktas is to become the Dasas of God, slaves of God, this is the fifth Purushartha so to speak which is known as Kainkarya. This involves the experience of inseparable dependent relationship between the Svami or Lord and Sevaka (servant).

The glory of being the servant of the Highest seems to him to be greater than the glory of being identical with Him. Here is a Godhead and Master who indwells the hearts of his devotees and servants and is their very self.

Tyagaraja's two songs on Sri Venkatesvara reveals his experience of the Divine Lord as He who is the incomparable Master (Svami) who has taken residence in his heart-lotus when he became absorbed in the song sung by him. God indeed gave himself up to the singer. In the more famous song the Saint speaks about his experience of the veil that hides the Divine which he prays to the Lord to remove, almost echoing the prayer in the Isavasyopanishad *'Hiranmayena patrena satyasyapihitam mukham, tat tvam pusan apavmu.....'*

*"Teratiyaga rada nalon Tirupati
Venkataramana matsaramanu...."*

He assures the Divine Lord that he has adopted his Mata (*nimatamu nanasarinchina*), the Paripurna Bhakti marga (ref.Song. *Parintuvo palimpavo*.)

The necessity for the experience of the divine grace seems to be paramount and all the songs are in a sense a continuous soulful melodious Dhyana of the Lord. Even the knowledge of song or Sangita-jnana is something that has to be God's gift (*dhata-rama-valera*) not by mere study nor intellect could one have this gift of song. It is the grace of God that in fact makes for deliverance.

It is true that though Tyagaraja was solely devoted to Sri Rama even of the Ramayana, he did realise the

truth of the other Divinities, like Ganesha or Ganapati, Shadanana (Kumara), Lord Siva, Parasakti and Raja Rajeswari and others. It is seen that he beheld in all the One Divine for he has also sung about the Supreme Being in all the trinity and beyond also.

In his song he reveals that he has appreciated the divine as having several forms.

"In one form thou protectest, in another form thou rulest, in a third form thou merely seest." Is there not in Thee a whit of bliss granting in Thee O Lord?" and concludes that all the three verily are bliss-granting.

(Oka rupamuna brochi, oka rupamuna nechi, oka rupamuna jucuchichuntivi gani sukha-dayaka suntaina leda akalanka Tyagarajar-cita carana....)

Dedication through Prayer

The philosophy of real theism demands the total dedication of the individual to the service of God through prayer and song seems to be more appropriate to perform this prayer. It is only when prayer becomes a ritual that it becomes stereotyped and mechanical. The heart must well up towards the Divine even as the Divine gets absorbed in the song of the devotee.

The one boon that the individual soul heartfully could ask of the Lord is when He indeed appears to take it into His protection. Saint Tyagaraja in fact asks "What boon can I ask of Thee O Lord? and answers 'If the royal path of devotion is vouchsafed to Tyagaraja that will be a real triumph for him', knowing as he did that several services were being performed by great devotees of the past, like Anjaneya, Satrugna, Lakshmana and Mother Sita.

The practical Vedanta, so to use the phrase of Swami Vivekananda, depends on the worship of God as the One in all things, Gods and souls. The theoretical Vedanta may mean monism, a matter of traditional affiliation thanks to being born in that persuasion. The path of devotion enlightened by Jnana (that the Divine must be known as recognized as the one sole object of one's life by which one gains deliverance and permanent happiness) and Vairagya (renunciation of all other means and ends) is Puma-Bhaktimarga. The manner of devotion is Dhyana through Sangita (melodious and well-disciplined singing so as to make even God enraptured in the devotees' song of love).

The singing of the Divine is the surest means of winning the Grace of God which in a concentric movement

develops Bhakti into Jnana and Vairagya and thence to Bhakti and Jnana. This concentricity is evident in the almost repetitive songs in different Ragas, one theme variegated by the different Ragas which express different emotions suitable to enhancing the love of God. The basic philosophy of love is now subordinated to the out-pouring of the speech of surrender and love and dependence on God. Tyagaraja fulfils the needs of the soul that almost starts from utter desolation through the cry of anguish towards the triumphant claim of attainment of the Ramabhakti Samrajya. So much so the Jivanmukti ideal which is placed before the Advaitin as the necessary first step towards the final of Videha-Mukti is more concertedly realised through this experience of freedom from the delusion that one is one's body. This he has expressed beautifully in his song 'Manasu svadhinamaina ye ghanuniki mari mantra tantram lela? Tanuvu tanugadani yeriguvani tapasuseyanela?'

("What need is there for mantras and tantras to one who has controlled his mind? What need is there for Tapas to one who has known that his body is not he?")

Those who are deluded by the notion that they are their bodies suffer from the greatest delusion. The knowledge that God's love is all that is needed makes one abandon dependence on Mantra-diksa and Tantra-diksa, for which almost all people are running about from saint to saint. That does not mean that Tyagaraja does not think that the Ramamantra is not necessary. Indeed a meaningful constant remembrance or singing of the name of Rama is very necessary for evoking the love of God, and God's love towards man. In his own personal experience he had to the full the divine reciprocity of love which made his life an epic of devotional song, comparable to the earlier tradition of singing as the way of love of God.

As he puts it

"Ramabhakti samrajyame
manavulakabbeno manasa.
Amaanaavula sandarsanam atyanta brahmanandame
Elagani vivarincalenu
Chala svanubhavavedyame
Lilasrsta jagatrayamane kolahala...."

It is a matter for personal experience-this sovereign reign of Ramabhakti which is comparable perhaps to the Ramarajya. In a world where the real existence is not available

"Satta leni dinam vaccera

Sattamatrama saccittasayi saketa nilaya daiva (satialeni dinam vaccera)"

7. Of my Aspects of Bhakti (Mysore University)

(The only cure for this is not barren philosophy of Satta or asatta, but the bringing down the real Satta-Godly name by which we can be diverted to the path of good people, avoiding and being into the very life and tissue of every human being.)

Sangita Ramayana

The philosophy underlying this is the practical method to be adopted for the incoming of the divine into the individual, and Music or Song that is devoted to the Divine, calling to the Divine and offering oneself in all one's parts to the Divine and the Divine only. This to Tyagaraja cannot be the Absolute Divine or the transcendent Godhead of the Advaita metaphysics, but the practical idol of the incarnate divine-which the Agama propounded by Narada (Narada-bhakti sutras and the Narada Pancaratra) inculcated. This is the religion of Devotion to the Personal Godhead, especially of Sri Rama, the incarnation of Vishnu. In the song he seeks refuge in the Divine "Saranusarananucu moraliditira". He mentions the Ramayana episode of Kakasura which is referred to by the Sri Vaishnava theologians as a classic example of granting refuge to the man who has sinned against Mother Sita. The other examples are of Vibhishana. The *Srimad Ramayana* has been acclaimed as the Saranagati Veda by these theologians and no wonder Sri Rama became the Ideal Purushottama for purposes of worship and surrender to the great musician saint. In fact, the whole sum of Songs could in a sense be arranged to represent the entire Ramayana-as Sangita Ramayana.

Bhakti Sutras

The Bhakti sutras lay down the worship of the Divine as comprising Kirtanam, praise, Sravanam (hearing of God), Padasevanam, Vandanam, Dasyam, Sakhyam, Atmanivedanam, Kantam and Tanmayam⁷, Tyagaraja has expressly referred to these steps in the different songs. In his famous song on Narasimha he states that he has performed his Japa, his constant remembrance, and worship of his feet (Ni Japamu, ni Smarana, ni Padapuja, nivarichelimi mosagi ravaga dayaseyu.....). These are possible in fact when one takes up the Archa (image) for daily Grhastha worship. One develops the peculiar realisation that the image is not just a stone or metallic image but a living presence with which one can talk and communicate and develop Sakhyabhava. The temple icons also did this in a larger scale for the entire community or area, but the small home Vighraha has been no less important than the temple. Tyagaraja worshipped both and knew their oneness. In Advaita-the transcendent, the

creator, the Avatars, the Antaryamins and the Archas are indeed One appearing for the sake of the devotee in five-fold or in fact myriad ways. None of them could be deemed to be illusion, and indeed the entire sum of songs of Tyagaraja do not lend colour to the impression that he was placing any importance to Maya-as the philosophic differentia of Advaita. He mentions that the whole world may be considered to be Lila.

He mentions that those who cannot steady their minds have created the net of Maya and seek freedom from it (*Manasunilvani varu mayajalamu jesi mari muktigoranaune?*).

Mind is the Enemy of Freedom

"*Manaeva manusyanam karanam bandhamoksayoh*" Mind verily is the cause of both bondage and freedom. When the mind is directed to the contemplation of the Divine and gets absorbed in the Divine and in turn is filled wholly by the Divine, then freedom results. To know who and what is Divine is the first step: this is knowledge, to meditate on the Divine as the sole object of one's mind is the second step; and this, in the opinion of the school of Narada, to which Tyagaraja belongs, is achieved through singing of the glory and life and perfections of the most puissant personality. God as Avatar in the personality of Sri Rama and Sri Krishna. Indeed Sri Krishna Himself had taught the path of song to attract the souls to Him, similarly the soul can attract God through song.

As Tyagaraja himself says that song whose object is absorption in God is divine as contrasted with songs devoted to praising or describing the human beings, even emperors. The human soul is like a calf to the Divine and as he remarked even like the cow going after calf, the Divine is going after the souls. However, one must seek the abode where there is neither birth nor death (*puttu cavu leni tavu teliyaka pogaderu*), but men sing naught of that abode but transient places-even in Svarga. Sri Rama is verily the form of Moksha (Moksarupam) for Tyagaraja. Without devotion song is meaningless, and purposeless; poetry itself becomes just weavings of poetic fancy - which in the language of Plato one must banish from every city-state. As he put it, his philosophy and technique of music is simply to attain the abode of Sri Rama knowing it to be his love-breath. Not the study of the Veda, not friendship or company of rulers, not the attainment of Siddhis to rule the world, nor yet the getting of enjoyment. "None of these are attainments of abode-only Sri Ramuni tattvam".

teliyani dokapadava?" (It is an attainment or abode which knows not the supreme meaning of Sri Rama). As Sri Krishna in the *Gita* has stated : (XV.16)

Yo mamevam asammudho janati purushottamam
sa sarvid bhajati mam sarbhavena bharata

("He who undeluded thus knows me the supreme Purusha, he all-knowing worships me with his whole being, O Bharata.") (Sivananda's translation).

Narada Sampradaya

It is clear that Tyagaraja has followed strictly the Vedic concept of the One Supreme as Brahman who has indeed become incarnate as the Supreme lovable, adorable Being Sri Rama (and other Avatars, and powers or godheads also). He has followed the Bhakti as propounded by Naradha Maharishi, and his school or Sampradaya of song to emphasise the sweetness of the Object of adoration in every sense, as it grants ultimate beatitude. His acquaintance with similar Narada Sampradaya schools of Bhakti reveals the strict Bhagavata tradition in respect of the mode of life to be lived by a Bhakta, the Aradhana and the Bhajana in Sat-sanghas of worshippers. He indeed was liberal minded and appreciated the songs of other great songsters as in his masterly song *Endaro mahanubhavulu....*" Many indeed are the great souled ones or those who have mahabhava or extreme love of God. To all he offers his salutations.

Though the Saint had seen persons entering into strange or odd systems and becoming dissatisfied with them moving from one to the other, he had become convinced of the Bhakti as practised by the members of the Sri -natha-kula not for the sake of filling his belly, but as a direct means to self-realisation or the realisation of the Divine Godhead who can grant him freedom from all bondages, or the recurring cycle of birth and death.

The Bhakti realisation through continuous divine song was the experience of the miraculous presence of God, his ready nearness at all times, the conversational terms with which the Divine, the Infinite, the Transcendent could bend towards the finite and the immanent, in a supreme felicity of Tanmayatva (that filledness) that lent meaning to the phrase-bhedarahita-jnana between the individual soul and the Universal Divine who is the Self in all. This mystic phase of experience obviously is beyond the scope of expression though not beyond experience (Svanubhava).

Rescue of Music

Tyagaraja does not reveal in his works any awareness of the vast hymnal literature of the Alvars or the Nayanmars who also are said to have been singers of the eternal, though he lived in the heart of Tamilnad. This is curious but perhaps it can be explained by the fact that the singing according to the science of Music had not developed or was in disuse, and further singing or music had not been cultivated as the means to self-realisation or realisation of God. Philosophical discussion and singing of Stotras seem to have been cultivated instead, and singing was left to the common folk. But the common folk are by and large the real core of a culture and their training in the appreciation of *Rasa* of divine name and divine song was about the most important role that Tyagaraja played in changing the minds of men from jazz and other human music. 'Daivi Sampatti' can only be forged by the hearing of the Divine music, even as the secular music is being currently encouraged for secular business. As Milton has said 'fallen on evil days and evil tongues' Music was rescued to its divine role by Saint Tyagaraja. But this direction is what one has to plead for again in this age when Kali is endeavouring to raise its fanged heads.

If the great Muse, Prometheus stole the fire or poetry or song from the gods so that man may enjoy the delights of divine music, it turned out to become humanised poetry, where instinct stole the thunder of the divine intuition and turned poetry into social or natural medium or praise of the mere human and his relational being. Thus when divine music instead of being the linking up of the human heart with the Divine, a kind of sublime Yoga or sublimating Yoga, became the humanised expression of humanised anthropomorphic *Rasa*-*alankaras*, then it has stepped from the high function as Yoga down to just enjoyment (*Anubhava*). This is undoubtedly a degradation of the *Rasa* as Brahman to the level of *Alankarikararas*. This is perhaps pardonable insofar as the other of the relation is God. But when that other is also reduced to human proportions and dimensions, then *Rasa* develops *Rasabhasa*-failure of *rasa*.

Saint Tyagaraja in his Song-Yoga (*Sangita-Yoga*) has tried heroically to remind his audience that true song is that which is devoted to singing to God, conversing with God for the sake of union with Him. In this he was but carrying out the ancient tradition of the seers of song, and poetry not to sing of aught but God and God alone. Not only does it reveal his spiritual purpose and direction but also the austerity of his one-pointed devotion. All Ragas

lead to Him from him out of love they flow out to Him. As I said earlier, God taught man how to attract the souls in the personality of the holder of the flute, and Tyagaraja taught that song can also do well at the hands of saints of music or mystics of divine union the same function of bringing God towards man, the muse and the mystic.

In a sense, since the words, muse, mystic and the almost misunderstood word mouse (*Musika*) which is the vehicle of the great God who was the writer for the foremost Kavi Vyasa, Ganapati, almost mean the same with different functions, we find that meditation, music, mystic aspiration, the secretive obscure and yet profoundly helpful in cutting the knots of the net of *Samsara* (as in the famous episode in *Mitrabha* in *Panchatantra*) are necessary for the yoga of union with God through song, which is seeking the mystic union with the Divine whatever the pattern of that relations according to philosophical understanding. To attain God first is the first goal, after that one does not bother to ask what the relationship is between God and oneself, as that is a matter to be decided after Yoga. In this sense Tyagaraja is the most practical mystic of theism we have had and his enthusiasm poured out to the common folk by hosts of his *Shishyas* still continues to inspire men towards union with God through rapture of song.

Philosophy behind music

The philosophy behind music is essentially to give freedom (*Mukti*) to the individual's essential nature as spirit. Thus the creative function of the individual comes about when it devotes itself till the adoration and conversation with the Ultimate eternally Free-Godhead. The technique of music, the shapes and forms of its notes and melodies, the *Chandas* and other aspects are undoubtedly factors which the other contributors to the study of the great Saint would do justice.

One thing undoubtedly goes to the credit of Saint Tyagaraja that Music for him was the way to liberation (*Mukti*) both here and hereafter. It was not his purpose to permit its use to any other purpose. Indeed, he rescued music from both misuse and abuse and made it as sacred as the ritual sacred music which almost lost its melody and meaning to the ordinary man. Tyagaraja's music made a bridge between the sacred ritualistic chant and the secular music for enjoyment, and thus restored to the one the divine a subject for song, and to the other the melody that it had lost as it were.

Herein lies his supreme contribution : he brought to music that creative purpose which it had almost lost.



First Floor Foyer of the Hall

Concept of Sruti and Its Application in Ragas

By Dr. S. Bhagyalakshmi

("Twentytwo Srutis" - what a magnificent role these microtones play in the music of India, the melody-based Raga Sangeet! The concept of Sruti has been a subject of perennial discussion and dispute. Many a forum and Seminar has been held. Varied interpretations have been made and reams written discussing on its complexities, numbers etc., and books published - all in a highly technicalised language. A few musicologists have made efforts to reach it on practical basis. Yet a near acceptable formula is still elusive.

Here is an analysis of the concept in terms of Svaras figuring in Ragas more popular than rare, and that seems to make understanding of the concept, musicologically, much easier. However practical enunciation is altogether a different factor. Could Ragas be enunciated through 'measured' Svaras? - Ed.)

The World of Music is an ideal stream flowing universally without any barriers. This river of music during its course gave birth to two branches, namely, Western and Eastern systems of Music (Occidental and Oriental Music). Indian music is believed to be nearly 3000 years old. While Indian Music is purely melodic, and based on the principles of Sruti and Laya, Western music is harmonic and rhythmic. They are called melodic and harmonic music respectively.

Indian Music has Sruti, and Laya as its mother and father, "Sruthirmathah Layah pithah". It is impossible to think of our music without Sruti and Tala. Both are inevitable and indispensable to our system of music. Sruti is more important since it is considered to be the backbone of Indian Music. It occupies a prominent role in bringing out the characteristic features and individuality of Raga, compositions; and Sruti forms the basis for the Gamaka Prayogas and Svara Sancharas.

What are the Srutis? The minutest pitch that is audible and pleasing to hear to the human ear is termed as Sruti. It is the fraction of a semitone and is also the smallest audible difference of pitch. The term Sruti means the pitch that is pleasing to hear. "Srutyante ithi sruthayah".

Sruti forms the foundation and basis of everything in our system of music. Many number of Srutis give rise to Svaras which in turn led to the emergence of Svara patterns, phrases in Ragas and compositions.

Pitch and Microtone

The moment we speak of Sruti, we get the concept of Sruti as singing in unison with Sruti accompaniment. It is highly essential that in Indian music we must adhere to

a single Sruti throughout the concert. There are specific musical instruments designed mainly for Sruti accompaniment, such as Tambura, Sruti box etc. The tuning system in Tambura will be p s s in Madhya Sthayi. The pitch will be decided by the musician or the performer. There are some other instruments wherein the sruti device is built in the instrument itself as in Gottuvadyam, Sitar, Veena etc. The singer should adhere to a pitch in which he will be free to perform easily in a range of two octaves, ie., from Mandra Panchama to Tara Panchama. Male voice will be having a pitch range from 1/4 to 2 and female voice from 4 to 5 1/2 or even to 6. For singing light music or film music the pitch for both will be the same. Female voice will have to adjust to the pitch of male voice, for this purpose they use false voice. Musicians generally use a pitch pipe-a handy device to fixing their pitch.

Theoretically, in our music, the Srutis mean the microtones, which give rise to Svaras. There is a universally accepted statement that Svaras are seven, Svarasthanas twelve and Srutis 22. Indian music has accepted 22 Srutis and called them as Dvavimsathi Srutis. Even though there exists difference of opinion regarding the number of Srutis as 22, 24, 32, 48, 53, 66, 96 etc. The number 22 has been invented and proved scientifically by experiments.

It was sage Bharatha, author of *Natyasastra* who devised the theory that there can be only 22 Srutis in an octave. He lived during the period between 2nd century B. C. and 2nd Century A. D. His authoritative work *Natyasastra* dealing with the Art of Dramaturgy has devoted special chapters for the description of 22 Srutis. He invented the Dvavimsathi Srutis by scientific experiments. Bharata devised the 22 Srutis with the help of the Dhruva and Chala Vina experiment. The strings of the Dhruva Vina were kept constant for Sruti verification.

and Sruti reduction was made in the Chala Vina by deflecting the strings. By means of this experiment stage by stage, Bharatha came upon many theoretical facts.

Science of Musical Sound

The experiment was highly systematic and simple. At first Bharatha tuned the seven strings of both the Vinas to the notes of Shadja Grama, the scale prevalent during his time. As the first stage, he reduced the Panchama string of the Chala Vina by one Sruti, i.e., a Pramana Sruti changing it into Madhyama Grama. On comparison, he found that there existed one Sruti difference between the Panchama string of Shadja Grama with that of the Madhyama Grama. Likewise he reduced the Panchama string of the Chala Vina six times. After each reduction he found certain changes. In the 2nd stage after reduction Bharatha found that the Gandhara and Nishada of Chala Vina coincided with Rishabha and Dhaivata of Dhruva Vina. With this he proved that there existed a Purna Sruti Ri-Ga, and Dha-Ni. After the 3rd stage of Sruti reduction by a Nyuna Sruti he found that there existed three Sruti interval between Dha-Ni and Ri-Sa. In the 4th stage when compared, he found that Dhaivata and Rishabha of Chala Vina coincided with Nishada and Shadja of Dhruva Vina. He continued the experiment till 6th stage. After the completion of the experiment he proved many facts:

The relation between Svara and Sruti is the same as that of $22/7$. An octave consists of 22 Srutis only and they are distributed among the Svaras in the proportion 4 3 2 4 4 3 2. There are four Sruti intervals such as Eka Sruti, Dvisruti, Trisruti, and Chatusruti. Further Eka Sruti itself admits of three intervals such as Pramana, Nyuna, and Purna. Two or more Srutis give rise to Svaras which in turn led to the emergence of Svara phrases and Raga. Each Sruti is represented in 3 values, i.e., on the basis of fractional, vib/sec and cents value. An octave has 2,480, 1,200 value for the Srutis.

The evolution of Svara Saptaka can be traced back to the Vedic period. In the beginning Vedic hymns were chanted to a single note and the style of rendering was known as Archika. The monotony of singing hymns to a single note was overcome by singing hymns with slightly raising and lowering the notes. The three notes were named as Anudatta, Svarita, and Udatta, which later on became Nishada, Shadja and Rishabha. The concept of Sama Saptaka, i.e., a scale having seven notes emerged during the Sama Vedic period. The Sapta Svara scale was evolved by the downward scale $m\ g\ r\ s\ n\ d\ p$ i.e.,

adding two notes above and below the three notes $s\ r\ n$. The scale $m\ g\ r\ s\ n\ d\ p$ was in Avarohana Krama. When $p\ d\ n$ was added above 'm' the Archana scale was obtained, thus leading to the emergence of a scale of Sapta Svara in the ascending order $s\ r\ g\ m\ p\ d\ n$. The notes of Sama Saptaka was named Prathama, Dvitiya, Tiritiya, Chaturtha, Panchama, Shashta and Sapthama. Later on these were called respectively as Shadja, Rishabha, Gandhara, Madhyama, Panchama, Dhaivata, and Nishada.

In Hindustani music they are termed as Shadj, Rishabh, Gandhar, Madhyam, Pancham, Dhaivat and Nishad. These notes have equivalents in Western music such as Doh (C), Re (D), Mi(E), FO (F) Soh (G), La (A), Se (B). In Tamil music these notes were respectively known as Kural, Thutham, Kaikilai, Izhai, Uli, Villari, and Tiram. The varieties of Svaras were obtained by adding the prefix and also by raising and lowering each note by one or two Srutis. The 12 Svarasthanas were obtained by the mixing up of one or two Srutis to each note. The seven svaras were given the 22 Srutis in this way: Sa and Pa being constant and Achala Svaras admitted of one Sruti each and the rest $r\ g\ m\ d\ n$ gave rise to four Srutis each ($1+1+(5 \times 4) = 22$). In Hindustani music Sruti variation of notes are indicated by adding Komal or Tivra, while in the West they are indicated by #) the sharp and flat ('b')

On an analysis we find that in both Hindustani and Western systems of music, Sankarabharanam known as Bilawal Thaata in Hindustani and Major scale in Western music is taken as the fundamental scale respectively. The Svara varieties were given the independent names. In addition to the 12 Svarasthanas 4 more names are added to the Ri, Ga, Dha and Ni. The Shatsruti Rishabha is the same as Sadharana Gandhara and Suddha Ga-same as Chatusruti Rishabha, Shatsruti Dha is the same as Kaishika Nishada, and Suddha Ni is the same as Chatusruti Dhaivata. These four Svaras are considered as Vivadi Svaras. The Ragas wherein Vivadi Svaras figure in are called Vivadi Ragas. In these Ragas, the interval difference between the Vivadi Svaras will be only one Sruti. When we analyse the Svaras figuring in Ragas, we find that these 22 Srutis come in one or other form in many of these Ragas. In all Ragas Srutis are given the status of Svaras and in some the Svara itself is given the Raga name. The fundamental Raga of Karnatic music is Mayamalavagaula and its Svaras are Shadja (1), Suddha Ri (16/15), Antara Ga (5/4), Suddha Ma (4/3), Panchama (3/2), Suddha Dha (8/5), and Kakali

Ni (15/8). The fundamental lessons of Karnatic Music like Sarali Varisa, Janta Varisa, Alankara, Dattu Varisa etc., are taught in this Raga only. This system of teaching was introduced by the Karnatak Sangita Pitamaha Purandaradasa.

The Miracle of Microtones

The first Sruti among the Dvavimsati Sruti is Shadja having the value as 1.0 and 240 vib/sec. This note is present in all the Ragas. The basic Sruti note for singing is also fixed as Shadja in which all instruments are tuned. This forms the basis for our system of music. The next four Srutis are the varieties of Rishabha. Eka Sruti Ri having the value 256/243, 252.80, 90 can be found in Ragas like Gaula, Ahiri, Saurashtra etc. This is also known as Gaula Ri. In the phrases $rgmR$, $pmgmrgrM$, $mpnsR$ in Gaula, $pDnsrsR$, $gMgR$, $nsrsrs$, rs , $ndnDp$, in Ahiri, the Deergha Ri coming is Eka Sruti Ri. Dvisruti Ri is known as Suddha Ri and has the value 16/15, 256, 112. This comes in Mayamalavagaula, Saveri, Bhupala, Kamavardhini, etc. $mpdM$, gR , $ddpm$, gR in Saveri, $dpgddppgR$, dsR , srs etc. Bhupala are Suddha Rishabha. This is equivalent to Komal Rishabha of Hindustani Music and D flat of Western Music. Next Sruti, Trisruti Ri, figures in Ragas like Bhairavi, Kharaharapriya, Sriraga, Manirangu etc. However the way of singing Ri will be different in these Ragas. It has the value as 10/9, 266.6, 182. In Sriraga this can be seen in the phrase $pnsRgrs$, $mpmsrgs$ and in Bhairavi $dnsr$, grs , $dpgR$, $grsns$ etc. Chatusruti Ri having the value as 9/8, 270, 204 can be heard in major Ragas, Sankarabharanam, Kalyani, Kambhoji, Harikambhoji, Vachaspathi etc. This Sruti is also known as Suddha Gandhara. The next variety of Sruti is the first variety of Gandhara. This is also known as Suddha Gandhara and has the value 32/27, 284.4, 294. This Sruti is given the name Komal Sadharana Gandhara and can be seen in certain Ragas like Bhairavi, Todi, Subhapantuvarali, etc. In all these Ragas the rendering of Gandhara is different. In Todi Ga is the Jiva Svara and is sung with Gamaka, whereas in Subhapantuvarali it is sung without Gamaka- srG - $pmGr$ s $snsrgM$ - $pDnsrGr$ s etc., and in Todi $ddpmGr$, SrG - mp , mGr s and so on.

The next Sruthi is the third variety of Gandhara and is known as Sadharana Gandhara. It has the value as 6/5, 288, 316. This figures in Ragas like Simhendramadhyamam, Dharmavathi, Hemavathi, Keeravani etc. In Simhendramadhyamam Ga is prominent in the phrases like $pm\ gr$, $srgmR$, $pDnsrgs$ etc., and dn ,

$dpmgr$, rGm , gr , srG etc. The next Sruthi known by the Svara name Antara Ga is important. It has the value as 5/4, 300, 386 and figures in many important Ragas such as Sankarabharanam, Kalyani, Hamsadhvani, Mohana, Latangi, Charukesi etc. In Charukesi $pDpm\ G$, p , $dn\ dpm\ g$, Gandhara is important. The ninth sruti is known as Chyutamadhyama Gandhara or Pythagorean Major 3rd having the value as 81/64, 303.75, 408. This is the Jeeva Svara in Devagandhari and Saurashtra- $pDnd\ mpdpm\ Gr\ srm$, gr in Devagandhari reveals the importance of Ga.

The next sruti which is the Svara Suddha Ma is the same as 'F' of Western music. It has the value as 4/3, 320, 498. This is a very important Svara in many Ragas like Saveri, Mayamalavagaula, Keeravani, Sankarabharanam, Todi, Kathanakuthalam etc. In these Ragas Ma is rendered in different ways, i.e., with full Gamaka in Sankarabharana and Saveri, with little Gamaka in Mayamalavagaula and Todi and without Gamaka in Kathanakuthalam and Kuntalavarali etc.

The next Sruti is Tivra Suddha Madhyama having the value as 27/20, 324, 520. This Sruti as Svara figures in Ragas like Begada and Gaulipantu. This Sruthi is also given the name as Begada Ma since it is the life-giver note in Begada. The opening phrase in Begada Raga goes like this: $dpMgs$, $srgM$, $grgM$, Mgs etc. Ma is rendered as Deerga Madhyama.

The next Sruti is the same as Prathi Madhyama having the value as 45/32, 337.5, 578. This Sruti comes in Jeeva Svara in many Prathi Madhyama Ragas such as Kalyani, Pantuvarali, Hamsanandi, Purvikalyani, Subhapantuvarali etc. In Kalyani Ma is rendered with Gamaka as in the phrases pm , grs , gm , pDn , etc. But in Hamsanandi it is sung with little Gamaka. This is the same as Tivra Madhyama of Hindustani music and 'F' sharp of Western music.

The next Chyuta Panchama Madhyama is also known as Varali Ma since it is the Jeeva Svara of Varali Raga. It has the value as 799/512 or 65/45, 341.7, or 341.3 and 610. The opening phrase of the Varali raga has Madhyama in it. M , $grsn$, $srgM$, etc. Panchama is the 13th Sruti and has the value as 3/2, 360, and 702. This is the Svara which is taken in the cycle of 5th (Sa Pa) and has a high concordance when sounded along with Shadja. This Sruti is present in all the Ragas except Panchama Varja Ragas. Its equivalent is 'G' of Western music. This Sruti is taken as the basis of 5 Kattai Sruti.

The next Sruti Ekasruthi Dhaivata is prominent in many Ragas like Todi, Saveri, Dhanyasi etc. It has the value as 128/81, 379 and 792. In Saveri, Dha comes as the Jeeva Svara as in phrases like mpdpD, pD, rsnpD, dnDs. Dvisruthi Dha is also known as Suddha dha and has the value as 8/5, 384 and 814. Suddha Dha comes as Jeeva Svara in Ragas like Mayamalavagaula, Kamavardhini, Keeravani etc. Trisruthi Dhaivata is also known as Kambhoji Dhaivata since it is the Jeeva svara of Kambhoji Raga in the phrases like mgpD, snpD, dsrsndp, mgpDS. It has the value as 5/3, 400 and 884. Dhaivata should be sung with Gamaka. At the same time in its Mela Raga Harikambhoji Dha is not stressed and is sung as Harsva Svara; stress is given to Nishada.

The next Sruti Chatusruthi Dhaivata is prominent in many Ragas like Vachaspati, Kalyani, Gowrimanohari, Sankarabharanam etc. This is same as 'A' of Western music and Tivra Dhaivata of Hindustani music. The value is 27/10, 405 and 906. In Sankarabharanam Dha is rendered as a Deerga Svara as in the phrases like gmpd, sDp,d,n,S. In Ragas like Bhairavi, Manji, Anandabhairavi both Dhaivatas occur. In the opening phrase of the Kriti 'Upacharamu' in Bhairavi both Dhaivatas occur. II,,dn s,,ns,,n rs,n nd p ... II *Upa cha ra m u l a n u*

Nishada Svara also has got four varieties of Srutis. The first one is Komal Kaisika Nishada. Also known as Suddha Nishada. It has the value as 16/9, 426.6, 996. This Sruti figures in Ragas like Bhairavi, Todi etc. In Bharavi Swarajathi 'Kamakshi' (Misra Chapu) of Syama Sastri the opening phrase itself begins with Nishada.

II N,,,,, n,p, d,,,,, p,,,II ka,,,,,ma,,,,,kshi

In the seventh Charana Svara the starting Svara is Nishada

n,,,r, s,r, n,r, n,,,d, p,d, m,p, g,,,r, s,r,n,s, II

Nee pa vana nila ya su rasa muda ya ka ravidrita

The next Sruti is Kaisiki Nishada having the values as 9/8, 432 and 1018. The Sruti figures in Ragas like Kharaharapriya, Shanmukhapriya, Vachaspati,

Hemavathi, Suddha Saveri, Madhyamavathi, Chakravakam, Harikambhoji etc. In Harikambhoji 'Ni' is the Jeeva Svara especially in phrases like dn, dpm, n,d pmg n, dns etc.

Kakali Nishada the next Svara and the 21st Sruti figures as Jeeva Svara in many Ragas like Latangi, Kalyani, Sankarabharanam, Simhendramadhyamam etc. This is the same as 'B' of Western music and Tivra Ni of Hindustani music.

The 22nd Sruti Chyuta Shadja Nishada has the value as 243/128, 455.6, 1110 and figures as Jeeve Svara in Devagandhari, Kurunji, Saurashtra, Neelambari etc. The way of rendering is however different.

The last in this octave is Tara Shadja which is the Adhara Shadja or basic note for the next octave. This has the value as 2,480 and 1200 and figures in all Ragas except Nishadantya, Dhaivatantya and Panchamantya Ragas.

Thus we can see that the maximum number of Srutis practically possible in one octave is twenty two. Perhaps these twentytwo Srutis formed the basis for compositions Raga Alapana and Svaraprastara. It is the concept of 22 srutis which has earned a supreme rank and distinguishes Karnatic Music from other musical systems. Sruti Suddha or Sruti Jnana is an indispensable feature of our music. Musicians should take utmost care to sing in full accordance with Sruti. As a famous musician noted Sruti in its full form is followed in Hindustani music, but unfortunately this aspect is practically neglected in Karnatic music. It is an important aspect to be noted that in Indian concerts, musicians adhere to a single pitch throughout the concert. Each singer has a basic or fixed pitch for singing. But, in the West, the basic key is changed often. This system of singing is based on keys. Harmony is the basis of Western music in which harmonic effect is created by chords and choir singing. Care should be taken to maintain consonance and melody. Thus basically all the systems of music are based on certain fundamental principles. Difference is mainly in the names and mode of Prayoga or way of singing. Music is universal and one.

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'Mother! Arise! Awake!! Act!!!'

Mothers do wake up children and fathers too are used to wake up children; Sage Viswamitra took to a musical praise to arouse the two Princes of Ayodhya and it was fair and real. They were quite young and should have been tired trekking distances with the warrior-turned-saint.

But is it normal or fair for children to wake up mothers and fathers? Of course, it is but fair when children are hungry-be it physical or jnana. Thus in *Tiruppalli Ezhuchchi* exactly it happens. The Lord is in slumber and would not rise up. Children of God (as humans are described) or *Nayikas* (if God is taken as *Nayaka* as has been portrayed in many songs by eminent composers) sing His praises praying for Him to rise up to bless them. Well, it could be glossed over as poetical fancy or poet's fundamental privilege to present his lyric in whatever manner or structure he likes. It could not be objected to as the inlaid love and passion for God is the essence or soul of the song. It is left to the poet to praise Him in whatever manner he chooses to.

Well. When the endearing mother, the holy mother, the mother who kept awake for millennia, sleeps soundly and would not wake up even when the house is on fire and being looted, it is a different matter altogether. It was what happened to Mother India, the Bharatamata, hailed with respect by Bankim Chandra, Rabindranath Tagore, Namakkal Kavignar, Subramania Bharati and a host of other poets and millions of Bharatias. Bharat had become the hunting ground for marauders, pillagers and conquerors but the mother was sleeping still! Was she not in coma for well over a millennia-'*Orayiram andu mandu kidandal*' Well at least then she could have woken up and faced the realities of the situation and charted out a plan of action with her children. No. She failed and continued to be in slumber! A noble, cultured mother, hailed as a paragon of virtues, a good lady worshipped by sages and seers and yet she was in slumber and would not wake up! What a tragedy had it been!

A child was born on December 11, 1882 at Ettayapuram in the far south, a place chosen by Muthuswami Dikshitar of the Karnatic Classical Trinity to cast aside and confine his mortal frame to flames and depart for his *advaitic* home in 1835 and which proudly presented the first-ever thesaurus on Karnatic music *Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini* of Subbarama Dikshitar

in 1904. He was a vibrant patriot, poet and reformer and too brilliant and multi-faceted to live long. And he died on September 12, 1921. Within that short span of his life, he was deeply upset and felt outraged and felt that his mother (country) had no business to sleep on. He was too fond a son to throw water on her face or shout at her. He knew that his mother would respond instantaneously if woken up with a kind word, song or signal. A musical soul himself and having drunk the loving captivating *Tiruppavai* songs of Sri Andal to wake up her girl friends early in the morn and the alluring *Tirupalli Ezhucchi*. (Musical Rousing of God) of apostles of Siva and Vishnu, he chose that mode with faith and confidence and he was successful! The mother woke to his song and got her freedom at long last! The song is *Pozhodu Pulamdadu yam seida tavattal* (Bouli). A summary of the song is given below:

*Mother! The sky is bright; the day has dawned
Our long penance and prayers over darkness stands
banished
Golden rays of the Sun of Wisdom illumine all
Gathered around thee are volunteers in thousands
To sing Thy praise and salute thee
Should thee be strangely in slumber still?
It amazes us. Pray rouse thyself, dear mother, wake up!*

*We are thy children and we seek to wake our mother up!
Thou art slumbering even after thy children rouse thee up?
Mother of the world! How could thee fail to heed us?
Can there be a mother who heeds not the prattle of her
children?*

*Mighty Queen of the children of Bharat!
We sing thy praises in eighteen languages
as per thy wish;
Mother hasten rise up and bless thy children quickly!
Bestow happiness all around*

The patriot-poet sought to rouse up the slumbering masses who toiled hard, forgot their proud lineage and rest content forgetting their self-respect as sons of Bharat. He composed and sang songs in diverse structures, tunes, modes and emotions in a bid to get at the last man in the corners of Tamil Nadu. He is hailed as a national poet and Maha Kavi. He lived a life of an absolute patriot in thought, speech and action and sacrificed everything. He deserves more. Rajkumar Bharati is his great grandson who has opted for the life of a musician though an engineer himself unlike many others of his age who have one leg in a cushioned job and another leg occasionally in music.

- Garland N. Rajagopalan

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Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai

By K. S. Mahadevan



Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai

"As none but the highest mountains of a country are visible at a great distance, so none but the most towering and exalted characters of a remote age are prominent in posterity". -Charles Burney in *"General History of Music"*.

This is the centenary year of a stalwart of the previous generation viz., Sangitha Kalanidhi Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai. As the veteran violinist passed away in 1970, none but the old Rasikas will remember his ability as an accompanist. Irrefutable proof of it was that his accompaniment was at one time actually sought by a string of super-star vocalists of yester-years like Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, G.N. Balasubramaniam, Madurai Mani Iyer, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, Semmangudi and lesser lights. This fact has to be set against the pejorative impressions that today's young rasikas sometimes have when hearing old tapes or radio recordings of his. More of this anon. To quote Burney again:

"So various are musical styles that it requires not only extensive knowledge and long experience, but a liberal, enlarged and candid mind to discriminate and allow to each its due".

Rajamanickam Pillai was born on 5th August 1889 at Alangudy near Nidamangalam. His mother was

interested in developing his musical talent and his formal education in Town School, Kumbakonam was stopped in the III Class. He was initially put under the tutelage of Nagawaram Vidwan Kandaswami Pillai at the age of 9 for vocal music, then was switched on to comprehensive training under Thiruvisanallur Pallavi Narayanaswami Iyer and Pandanallur Chinnaswami Pillai from whom he learnt a lot. Thirukkodikaval Ramaswami Iyer then took him under his care to teach him violin playing.

There is an unconfirmed report that, although Rajamanickam Pillai possessed a good voice and was indeed progressing very well in vocal music, he was dissuaded from taking vocal music up as a profession and instead chose violin playing as his metier. (In later years, this writer had occasions to experience Sri Pillai's proficiency in vocal music, making one wonder why he was turned off!) Having opted for the violin profession, young Rajamanickam never looked back.

To enhance his store of knowledge, he was sensible enough to approach stalwarts like Umayalpuram Swaminatha Iyer of the Tyagaraja Sishya Parampara, the veteran Namakkal Narasimha Iyengar (who later settled in Srirangam) and flute Vidwan Nagaraja Rao. He learnt from them a large number of Kritis - precious Patantara, spread over 10 years which was to prove a great asset to this young violinist as in later years he could play his role of accompanist to the great vocal maestros with subtle touches and optimum assistance on several occasions.

Today when the once small stream of Rasikas of decades ago has grown into a flood, when organisers are keeping an Argus eye on rising talent and Sabhas are unafraid to stage concerts by what seem like child prodigies, the rise of a talented young musician is nothing to be wondered at. Back in the first two or even three decades of this century, even a very talented youth had to be smiled upon by Dame Luck, to get a chance to show off his or her merits. More often than not, the chance that came along was fortuitous. It was so with Semmangudi Srinivasaier when, in his 18th year, Mridangam Vidwan Alaganambi Pillai called upon him to sing at the festival in the Kumbakonam Nageswaraswami temple, as a substitute for someone who had not turned up.

In 1916, young Rajamanickam was called upon to

accompany on the violin Alangudi Natesa Iyer in the temple of Andipatti Zamindar. The young violinist proved his credentials to the satisfaction of pandits and 'pamara'. He had passed a severe test. No less a judge and musician than Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar of illustrious memory presented Rajamanickam with gifts and warmly praised his violin playing.

Thereafter, it was a straight career for him, as a reliable violin accompanist. This writer as a Secretary of the Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Mumbai for many years, had the experience that senior vidwans like GNB, Semmangudi, Madurai Mani, Alathur Brothers used to suggest Pillai's name as violin accompaniment for their concerts along with virtuosos like Palghat Mani Iyer and Palani Subramanya Pillai. Even when I suggested the name of the fast rising violinists, they stuck to their preferences. Once I had occasion to ask for the reasons for their choice which GNB once spelt out as follows :-

1. Sri Pillai was a man of vast experience of accompanying. This was seen in his adjustment to varied styles such as those of Maharajapuram, Ariyakudi, Semmangudi, GNB etc. In raga alapana, he would follow the singer like a shadow and when his turn came, he would never resort to one-upmanship.
2. His Patantara was vast and hence, when rendering Kritis, he would follow like a shadow, faithfully and carefully. His Niravals were short, shining bits. These endeared him to vocalists. He had full sympathy for vocalists, especially when negotiating Tara Sthayi phrases. Once, Madurai Mani Iyer elaborating Kanada Raga, paused on Tara Shadja for an appreciable interval evidently to encompass the phrase *ri pa ma*. Mani was evidently anxious that the jump from Ri to Pa must be right on target (as he was always). Rajamanickam, sensing the situation, touched Pa in Tara Sthayi accurately but with the least bow pressure. Mani understood, smiled and roared the phrase 'Ri Pa Ma' with hundred percent accuracy, the audience clapping enthusiastically. Such gestures greatly endeared Rajamanickam to vocalists.
3. Although hailing from the Vellala sect and being close to Nagaswara Vidwans, never was he known to adopt the Nagaswara *pantha* in Raga sketches. Not for him the long-winded and often repetitive methods of Nagaswarakaras. He would

strictly stick to the vocal style even in Ragas like Sankarabharanam, Todi, Kambhodi, Bhairavi etc. On such occasions, his Raga phrases would recall to the Rasika passages from the classic Kritis of the Trinity and especially those of Sri Tyagaraja. They were compact, lucid and adequate. His sketches of Saranga, Dhanyasi, Mukhari, Useni would be beautiful cameos. He employed these and similar Ragas in his solo violin recitals as well.

4. He was a diplomat *par excellence* in the field. His smooth temper was often in evidence in different situations. Once, when Chowdiah was late for a concert, Rajamanickam was approached to substitute for him and he readily agreed. But when Chowdiah did turn up, he yielded with grace, although he would have been fully justified in continuing playing.

He was a standing example of the truism that "Talent is respectable; but Tact is respected". The following incident illustrates:

The scene was Tiruvaiyar, during the Aradhana celebrations. There was a meeting organised at Kalyan Mahal in the evening to felicitate Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer and Rajamanickam Pillai on their contribution to Karnatic music. Speakers like Semmangudi and others were naturally profuse in their praises of the two.

Maharajapuram, for all his wit and flash in conversation, was not a good public speaker. When his turn came to thank the organiser, he mumbled a few prosaic phrases by way of thanks. It took about five minutes. Rajamanickam Pillai was a fluent and polished speaker always. When his turn to render thanks came, what he said was this:

"For many, many years, I had the good fortune to accompany Sri Viswanatha Iyer on the violin. I followed the cardinal rule of conduct that when he sang a Raga for, say, twenty minutes, I would restrict my raga playing to ten minutes. Today, he has spoken for just five minutes. I have already taken two minutes and as per my principle, I close my thanks-giving right now".

The huge audience applauded his shrewdness and tact.

He trained a few disciples, of whom Mayavaram Govindaraja Pillai, Sambandam Pillai, Kandadevi Alagiriswami and Sikkil Bhaskaran are notable examples.

In fact, in his solo violin concerts on the radio, he would invariably have one of them to assist. In such solos, he would play short sketches of Ragas like Pantuvarali, Varali, Saveri, Saranga, Dhanyasi, Bilahari etc., followed by appropriate Kritis. Nothing was overdone. In his days, short bowing was used for sketching a few pregnant Raga phrases, to convey a clear yet poignant picture of the Raga - unlike Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu who, with his knowledge of Western music, knew how to add tonal colour to his playing and enrich his output.

He lived to be 72 years. Honours from the Courts of Travancore, Mysore, Cochin, Ramnad, Ettayapuram etc., reflected his extensive popularity. He received the Sangitha Natak Academy Award in 1959, "Isai Perarignar"

from the Tamil Isai Sangam and Sangitha Kalanidhi Award in 1948 from the Music Academy.

On his death in 1970, the best epitaph came from Vidwan Musiri Subramanya Iyer. Musiri said *inter alia* :

"Padubavar Manodharmaththai Rajamanickam Pillai Avargal keduththade kidaiyadu". "Sri Pillai's playing was such as not to mar the principal singer's imagination".

Can there be a greater tribute to an accompanist than this ?

Courtesy : "Narada Gana Sabha Trust's Isai Natya Nataka Vizha - Souvenir".

"The Glorious Accompanist"

SHANMUKHA had advanced by five years its 'Centenary' tribute to the 'glorious accompanist' Rajamanickam Pillai. Picturing this mighty master as a taskmaster, it had observed :

"He spared no rod in disciplining his students and their Sadhaka. He let them find their own 'moorings' in musical nuances, and finer aesthetics whether in vocal or violin."

To cite an example extracted and translated from Tamil article in the same issue :

"Neduntheru R. Sadagopachariar, an exponent of Harikatha, was one of the Sishyas who learnt at the feet of this great Vocalist - Violinist. Once when the Guru taught the Sishya the Sankarabharana Adi Tala Varnam, the first Ettugada Swara (Charana Swara) did not register well with the student. Any number of repetition would not help him get a grip over the Akshara Kalas. Annoyed, the Guru hit him forcefully on the thigh and chided, "Iyengare, you can eat Puliyodarai and not sing this Swara?"

Wounded, the disciple vowed not to return to the class the next day unless he got the Swara correctly, and also give up music should he fail to succeed.

Overnight arduous Sadhaka bore fruits. As the Sishya was leaving for his Guru's house next morning, what did he see at his house front? The Guru himself, in his car, all the way from Kumbakonam to Neduntheru!

"What Iyengare! you threatened to give up music! I have come to fetch you."

Overwhelmed the Sishya apologised for his rash behaviour, and said he got the Swara correct. Then and there the Guru listened to him render it. And with a Sabhash, took him in his car to Kumbakonam for continuing the 'grind'.

Such was the magnanimity of Rajamanickam Pillai. Need it be said that Sishyas groomed under such discipline and affection rose to eminence in their own right? M. M. Dandapani Desikar, Neduntheru Sadagopachariar, Kumbakonam Mythili, V. P. Rajeswari, Papa Swaminathan among vocalists and Mayavaram Govindaraja Pillai, Kuzhikkurai Pichiappa Pillai (Nagaswaram), Ramamurthy Iyer and Sikkil Bhaskaran among the Violinists are some names to reckon with.

Source : "SHANMUKHA" - January 1994

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The Concert Tradition

By Ariyakudi T. Ramanuja Iyengar

(Reams have been written about the Concert Paddhati of Margadarshi Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar. Here the Margadarshi himself speaks of his "Margam" at a Symposium and published by the "Illustrated Weekly of India", November 5, 1961. The substance is relevant even today that SHANMUKHA reproduces what it had published in 1992 -Editor.)

It gives me immense pleasure to contribute to this Symposium an article on some aspects of Karnatak music. For, though I can claim a successful and unbroken career, extending over fifty-two years, I have had no opportunity till now to assemble and present my views on *Kacheri Paddhati* (concert *Sampradaya* or tradition).

Here, I propose to deal with *Kacheri Paddhati*, as I have learnt and practised it on the platform all these years, in the light of its historic background after a rigorous period of gurukulavasa, first under Pudukkottai Malayappa Iyer and Namakkal Narasimha Iyengar, and later, for over eleven years, under Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar of Ramnad. More than this, I have had the good fortune to listen to and learn from the expositions of such great masters as Tirukkodikaval Krishna Iyer, Tiruchi Govindasami Pillai, Saraba Sastri, Sakham Rao, Vinai Dhanammal and a host of others.

In vocal concerts today, certain changes are perceptible which, if allowed to grow unchecked, may spell ruin for our great tradition of Karnatak music, and eventually result in the total disappearance of *Sampradaya*. This is all the more regrettable when our music is claiming hundreds of adherents in the West.

Unbroken History

It is the peculiar feature of Karnatak music that it has survived the invasions of kings and chieftains, and feudal wars, in South India to build up a great tradition - a tradition that dates back to Vedic times. The Tamil classics speak of seven Palais, later developing into sixteen Melas, leading to a further emergence of one hundred and three Panns. Those versed in them were the Panars, such as Tiruppanazhwar, Tirunilakantayazhpanar and others. They were not worldly-minded; to them music was divine. They were God-intoxicated and aimed at the attainment of Supreme Bliss. Their devotional and soul-stirring lyrics were sung in the temples. Next, we are deeply indebted to Sarangadeva for his great and invaluable work, *Sangita Ratnakara*, in which he describes and interprets the *Lakshnas* of Karnatak music.

Karnatak music took its final shape and form from the time of Purandaradasa, who systematised the laws of teaching music and wrote of innumerable Padas and Prabandhas, besides compositing Svaravalis, Gitas, Suladis, Tayam and Alankaras in the Saptas Talas as preliminary exercises and early lessons which must necessarily be learnt. Subsequently, Ramamathya, in his work, *Svaramelakalanidhi*, condensed the *Sangita Ratnakara* and explained the nature of nineteen Melas and their one hundred and sixty-six Janya-Ragas. But it was Venkatamakhi who formulated the scheme of seventy-two Melas in his *Chaturdandi Prakasika*. It is, however, not known if he assigned names to the several Ragas. Later, Akalanka, in his work *Sangitasarasangraha* spoke of a number of Ragas and determined their lakshanas. The great work of Govindacharya, *Sangrahachoodamani*, is an authoritative and later contribution, containing Lakshana gitas for 366 Ragas (including the 72 Melas), and this became the classic authority for the great vidwans like my guru Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar.

"Kacheri"

While the great stream of Karnatak music has been enriched by Vaggeyakaras who have preserved the musical forms, like the Varna, Kriti, Javali, Tillana and Svarajatis, the torch-bearers of South India's musical traditions were the numerous Sabha musicians and vidwans, who were patronised by kings, princes and zamindars.

Kacheri is an Urdu word, referring to the musical concerts held in the courts of the Mohammedan rulers in North India. It is akin to those held in the south which were known as Arangam, Sabha or Sadas. A Kacheri in its early phases was confined to a recital before a select gathering at the royal court or in the assembly hall on an auspicious occasion. The court of Sarabhoji of Tanjore seems to have had on its rolls nearly 350 musicians, each specialised in certain specific branches of vocal or instrumental music, and each waiting for a day in the year to exhibit his skill and prowess!

Varna Singing

The celebrated composer of the *Viriboni Varna* in Bhairavi, Pachimiriyam Adiyappayya, was a distinguished musician who adorned the courts of Tanjore, Pudukkottai and Ettayapuram - as also Pallavi Doraisamy Iyer, Gopala Iyer, Todi Sitarama Iyer, Sankarabharanam Narasayya and several instrumentalists and dancers. Varna singing may be presumed to have been in vogue from Adiyappayya's period. Among his disciples may be counted such distinguished names as Syama Sastri and Ghanam Krishna Iyer. We are ushered into the treasures of Tyagaraja by Umayalpuram Krishna Bhagavatar and Sundara Bhagavatar, Walajapet Venkatramana Bhagavatar, Tillaisthanam Rama Iyengar and Tiruvotriyur Thyagier. The point worthy of note is that, while Dikshitar adopted Venkatamakhi's system of Asampurna-mela-paddhati, Tyagaraja followed the Govindacharya Sampradayam of Sampurna-mela-krama.

Like my guru, I have never begun a concert without singing a Varna at the commencement. It imparts mellowness to the voice and a flavour to the subsequent rendering of Kritis or Ragas. Palghat Anantarama Bhagavatar and Bidaram Krishnappa began their concerts with Tana Varnas. In the past (pre-Varna days), performers used to sing Tanas in the Nattai, Gowla, Arabi, Varali and Sri Ragas, to the accompaniment of the Mridangam.

In the concerts, the singer is accompanied on the Violin and the Mridangam. Where a gayaka has specialised in the Laya aspects, he revels in having additional accompaniments, like the Kanjira, Ghatam, Morsing, Konnakol and Dholak. In early times, the musicians used to sing in Sthayi-Sruti; now they have lowered it, owing to several exigencies. A performer must be deeply conscious of his strengths and weaknesses. The effect of the performance should be such as to keep the listeners spell-bound, making them stay on to the very end, thirsting for still more.

Sruti sense, earnestness, a proper conception of Raga Swarupa, and good Laya jnana without these, it is impossible to perform entertainingly. The choice should be from classical pieces conforming to the South Indian type (whatever language), with a knowledge of the meaning thereof. The purpose should be to elevate and educate the listeners and improve their tastes. The concert should begin with a Varna, to be immediately followed by a few fast-tempo Kritis. Short and crisp Alapana, of two or three of the Ragas of the Kritis to be sung, may be rendered.

Kalpana-svaras must be limited and proportionate, and restricted to a few pieces, after a reasonable measure of Niraval.

The pieces selected should be of varied Talas, and no two of the same Tala need be sung consecutively. In rendering Kalpanasvaras, for Kritis or Pallavis, it would be more appropriate to adopt the traditional mode of Savalaghu pattern with variations in the Nadai in Tala imparting Ranjakatva, keeping in view the Raga-Swarupa. An admixture of slow and fast-tempo Kritis alternately is preferable. The main Raga for Tana, Pallavi, should be a Ghana Raga familiar to the audience, and the rendering of the Alapana must be fairly lengthy and should explore into the Mandhara Sthayi as well. In the Alapana of rare Ragas, their distinctive character should reveal themselves at the first touches in all their purity and clearness, and should neither get confused nor clash with Ragas closely allied to or resembling them. A couple of opportunities (according to the convenience of the artiste) may be given to the Mridangam player - the first, an hour after the commencement, the second during the Pallavi stage, in different Talas of convenient tempos.

The items should comprise Padam, Javali, Tevaram, Tiruppugazh, Ashtapadi, Tarangam, Tillana, Ragamalika and Sloka all of which must form Part II of the concert. The singer should enlist the co-operation of the accompanists all through, with the object of making the concert a success.

Thus it will be seen how the great tradition of Karnatak music has been built up by the South Indian genius. It is up to the Vidwans and Rasikas to see that this torch of Karnatak music is kept effulgent for all times to come and in all its glory.

* * * * *

Ariyakudi - A Product of His Times

Ariyakudi may be said to be a product of his times. Ever conscious of the changes occurring in the socio-economic and political fields, he recognised the responsibility of the musician to help in the polarisation of the performing arts. The *Concert Paddhati* that Ariyakudi conceived was not a plain entertaining methodology for a 3-hour time-frame. It was something that catered to both mind and heart. He employed both his intellect and his aesthetic sensibility, and with his superior intelligence, reorganised the concert format to suit the modern stage and to be worthy of appreciation by both *pundits* and *pamara*.

Education, enlightenment and entertainment had been the motto of this doyen. Precision and proportion were like a gospel to him, quintessence his musical breath and restraint his means of reaching his goal.

He never trifled even at school concerts. He sang to the students with the same seriousness of purpose as he did in public concerts. His purpose, as he confirmed once, was to educate the audience, young and old, entertain them and involve them in the classical arts. And he carried it with dignity and humility.

A staunch traditionist he certainly was. He would not compromise on Sastra; he still innovated within its parameters, laying a concrete concert Paddhati. Perceiving Madhyama Kala (middle-tempo) rendition as the need of the times, he moulded the Paddhati to this tempo. And it came handy too for two reasons: one to enliven the concert and keep audience interest alive and the other, to accommodate the strengths and weaknesses of his own voice.

Talking of the strengths and weaknesses of his voice here is a tip to young performing musicians.

He was a master controller of his voice. He would never yield to its vagaries. On the contrary, he knew how to wield it. Even in acute sore throat conditions, he would never despair nor cancel his concert. It is said that when so afflicted, Ariyakudi would sing in *Eka-Sthayi* (one octave) and choose Ragas that would fit in within this range, namely, *Dhaivatantya*, *Nishadantya* ones, like *Kurinji*, *Navroz*, *Nadanamakriya*, *Senchuruti*, *Chittaranjani* etc., and include many Tamil songs and hymns of Tiruppugazh and manage to present a 3-hour concert with unflagging vigour.

His sensitivity to audience interest was something unique, for an artiste of his stature. His response to the audience was almost instant and he never hesitated to modify his programme to suit and sustain their interest, at the same time he never sacrificed his ideals or norms. "The *Rasikas* were absorbed in his music. He never imposed it on them", a connoisseur once observed, to which one may add he never diluted his music to suit the situation.

An incident may be cited. Years ago, during one of his concerts in Bangalore, the maestro had just finished rendering *Endaro Mahanubhavulu*, the *Sriraga Pancharatna*, paying his Pranams, as did the composer Saint Tyagaraja, from his heart. There rose a chorus of 'once more'. He did not fold his hands in gratitude as any artiste would normally do. He started all over again, *Endaro Mahanubhavulu* with fresh vigour and veneration.

Questioned at the end of the concert by one of his fans, a student of Law then, if he was not bored to render the same song twice, he said "they are enjoying, they are requesting and after all it is Almighty's name we are chanting, how could one be bored to repeat?"

That however, did not mean Ariyakudi complied with every request of his *Rasikas*. When a host once requested him to sing *Tiruvadi Charanam* at a Wedding Kacheri, he quietly ignored it as it was inappropriate to sing that song at a marriage. This showed that he never lost his perspective. One of his contemporaries, Semmangudi Srinivasier called him "the greatest salesman for Karnatic Music". True, his propagation of concert music was whole hearted, but never commercial. He never let any opportunity slip through his hands. A boy unknown to him greeted Ariyakudi once and he started enquiring about the boy's family and was quite cordial to him. When a friend asked Ariyakudi what it was all about, he replied saying that cordiality only helps getting popular. "Suppose tomorrow there is a celebration in his house, may be, he will remember me and bill me for a concert"!

Ariyakudi was the first to sing Tamil songs in his concerts and also gave them prime place in the early phase, though not as Tukkadas. He also rendered them with *alapana*, *niraval* and *swaras*. But when the same was imposed on him he would rebel against it. The man was large hearted but would not give in to any authoritarian dictates. A full fledged concert of Tamil compositions was not possible from him. His guru Bhakti for Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar and Saint Tyagaraja, whose direct *Sishya Parampara* he belonged to, was such that without rendering *pranams* to them through their *Kritis*, no concert of his began. Strangely however, he was made principal of the Tamil Isai Kalluri, the music college of the Tamil Isai Sangam, Madras.

Ariyakudi's stature as the Concert *Pithamaha* was acknowledged by one and all, more so, by his contemporaries, some of whom were founders of *Banis* and trend-setters. Referring to him as a man and musician, GNB once wrote, "All through, Ariyakudi's career has been the cumulative result of professional dignity, business acumen and artistic ideas".

It was not because of chance or luck that he was successful. It was because of his firm ideals, adaptability in his music and manners, and alertness to contemporary musical trends and movements as well as his undeterred faith and conviction in tradition (Sampradaya). "This", GNB said, "is probably one instance of a unique wedlock of the seemingly incompatible *Sastra* or *Sravya*, and tradition and modernity.

-S.R.

SANGEETA BHISHMA PITHA SEMMANGUDI

(Sangeeta Bhishma Pitha Semmangudi Srinivasier was the Chief Guest of the Decennial celebrations of SHANMUKHA, the prestigious Quarterly of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha held in April 1985. Today the Quarterly has crossed the Quarter-century mark and is celebrating its Silver Jubilee. The Bhishma Pitha, the living legend, is very much with us, as agile as ever. While praying to Almighty for years more of his service to music, SHANMUKHA takes pleasure in publishing a short profile of the great master in this special issue.)



Semmangudi in a Concert at the Sabha accompanied by Lalgudi, Raghu & V. Nagarajan

Sangeeta Bhishma Pitha Semmangudi Srinivasier will be 92 this July. If at this age and stage the nonegenarian maestro can still pull a punch and hold captive vast audiences and be a role model it is because, as he himself confided to this writer two decades ago in an informal interview, of his deep-rooted belief in our past traditions.

If the epic poem *Bhavayami Raghuramam* of Maharaja Swati Tirunal which he chiselled into a Ragamalika still glows in its multi-hued structural splendour, if Bhairavi comes alive sublime in his rendition of that magnificent, *Swarajati Kamakshi Amba* of Syama Sastri, if his *Ksheenamai* (Mukhri) churns your heart, if you yearn for the dawn of Bhakti when he sings *Teliyaleru Rama* (Dhenuka), or if you are just excited at his *Marubalka* (Sriranjani) - despite its 'questionable' grammar when the 'excited' Sancharas peep through Panchama, it is all because of his conviction in the tradition and the vitality and vivacity in his musical expression acquired through 'Asura Sadhaka'.

"The abundant grace of his music is the outward expression of an inner harmony achieved through Sadhana of a rare kind. Talent for improvisation, devotion, classicism, creativity of a disciplined sort and absence of self-indulgence are the high points of his excellence. It is also true that no musician has worked harder or more steadily in pursuit of success as well as the higher ideals that should inspire and guide any Kamatic musician who wants to leave his foot-prints on the sands of time" - observes a confrere.

As Semmangudi himself recalled about the start of his career, the Arangetram at the precincts of the temple of Lord Nageswara at Kumbakonam with mute sculptures as audience and to the accompaniment of not only Violin and Mridangam but also torrential rains, and the success story thereafter, it was his approach to 'Sangeetham' as 'Ishwararpanam', with religious devotion that took him this far. The 'Gaana Mazhai' that started in 'Ghana Mazhai' still continues.

Yes, even today he is held in high esteem for his dynamic musical expression, the fire and zeal, the vitality and vivacity, the evocation of Bhava in the Gamaka-dominated Bani, be it a mere interpretation of a Kriti or highly imaginative and explorative phases of Alapana, Niraval and Kalpana swaras.

His Ishwararpanam has earned him admiration and accolades from all over the world.

'Semmangudi Srinivasier is the 'reservoir' of repertoire, an explorer often surfacing with invaluable gems, an 'artsmith' giving a new sheen to old tunes, a trend-setter casting a rare lyric in a musical mould. A teacher nonpareil. His contribution to the art is immense, his services perennial. His is perhaps the largest Sishyaparampara, a vast 'empire' meticulously conceived and nurtured with a number of Sishyas adorning academic 'chairs', earning accolades and awards on performing forum and also shining as illustrious teachers.

Sangita Kalanidhi Dr. S. Pinakapani hailed Sangita Kalanidhi Semmankudi for his musical vastness in a constricted time frame.

In a concert of two and a half hours he could produce the effect of a four-hour concert by packing every minute with creative imagination and detail. There was plenty of music material to remember, ruminate and emulate.....

....Sri Semmangudi's voice was not what he could have wished for. He tamed a refractory voice to suit his needs through hard practice. *Nadaposhana* is the characteristic feature of his voice. During a concert his voice will be heard sumptuously and without any breaks in such a way that one wonders if the musician was stopping at all to take fresh breaths. Even in his 70's while two of his disciples provided voice assistance in his concerts Semmangudi's voice alone will be heard throughout, drowning his disciples not because of its loudness but because of its continuity. There is no gamakam or quicktime phrase which his voice cannot execute in a split-second.

"....His was not a case of a musician who gradually rose to the summit step by step; he appeared to the music world on the top ever since his maiden concert. This is the stamp of a great musician.

Coming back to the concept of 'Ishwararpanam'. The concept is not an exclusive monopoly of the 'Gurukula' days, he says. Though the day-long grind of Gurukula system may not possibly be revived in today's socio-cultural milieu, its spirit and content could certainly be carried out in institutional coaching.

Not bemoaning the fall in standards of classical music as against that of the past, Semmangudi traces the present day ills and lack of interest in classical music to the two dimensional spread of music which has relegated the essential third dimension, viz., sanctity, to the background, with the result, the present day music is losing its appeal and lacks a sense of proportion.

The maestro observes :

"Musical evolution has never been an isolated phenomenon, and it has moulded itself in tune with the socio-economic milieu. To correct this even though gurukula system cannot be transplanted, the spirit behind it can certainly be infused into musical training. Intensive coaching under one Guru, ensuring parental care and affection is not an impossibility even today.....

To inculcate interest among youngsters, catch 'em young, teach them action songs in simple modes of Mohanam, Sankarabharanam or even Kharahara-

-priya. Once tempered with musical essence, the 'intake' of the alphabets (Sarasis) would be much easier.

An expert Lakshanakara Semmangudi restrained himself parading it for he believed in musical enunciation - Lakshya Gnana - rather than display of Lakshana Gnana - foisting theoretical perceptions. To cite an example, Semmangudi was the first to learn the Mela Ragamalika of Maha Vaidyanataha Sivan from his Guru Umayalpuram Swaminatha Iyer. But he had not propagated it nor performed for the simple reason that it was too 'heavy' for an average listener to understand or appreciate though it gives in one compact whole the entire 'practicalised' Lakshana of the 72 Melakarta Ragas.

That the great master-musician was no ordinary speaker came to light when the doyen stole the thunder recalling his association with 'Kalki' Krishnamurthy at the Kalki centenary celebrations held last year at Shanmukhananda Hall. It was almost an 'Alapana' of speech, dotted with Sarvalaghu Prastharas of anecdotes, pepped up with humour. No exertion, no faltering for expression. Words gushed forth coherently as he essayed Kalki as his Sishya in 'Rummy', and highlighted his power of pen, his humour as a weapon, his varied activities as art critic, a writer, a litterateur and as a person. But for time constraint, the audience would have enjoyed a full-fledged 'concert, on 'Kalki Krishnamoorthy'.

The multi-facted musician, the living legend has recounted in *Bhavan's Journal*, last September, "What life has taught him." SHANMUKHA reproduces the article in the following columns.

"My readers, perhaps, know what life has taught me- Music. I would like to say in this article how and from whom I learnt it. I would also like to say what other things I learnt besides music.

"I was born on July 25, 1908 in the house of my maternal uncle, Thirukkodikaval Krishna Iyer, a violin maestro. At the age of five, I was initiated into writing the alphabet on the auspicious day of Vijaya Dasami, after being helped to write and read "Om Namo Narayana" on a palm leaf.

We were residing at Semmangudi (situated between Tiruvarur and Kudavasal in Tanjavur District of Tamil Nadu) and there was no school there in those days. So, after my Upanayanam, at the age of eight, I began to learn music under the guidance of my cousin, Violin Vidwan Semmangudi Shri Narayanaswamy Iyer.

Later from 1918 to 1921, I learnt vocal music from Gottuvadyam Vidwan Sakharama Rao of Tiruvidaimaruthur. He showered love on me as he would do on his own son. At that time Devakottai Narayana Iyengar was also learning music under Sakarama Rao.

"My guru was a man of deep devotion and piety. Whenever he was in financial difficulty, he used to go to the temple of Sri Mahalingaswamy and light lamps praying to the deity. Soon, providentially, someone would come and fix him up for a musical concert.

"He was a great devotee of Lord Dattatreya. During the month of Margazhi (December-January) he would bath in Kavery river early in the morning and return home singing devotional songs (Abhangs) along the streets. This scene would remind the onlookers of Sant Tukaram. For his music performances, his brother Hari Rao used to play on the violin. Because he was very particular about *Laya* he did not keep any other accompaniments.

"During the 'guru-kula' days, I used to attend many music concerts at temple festivals. In those days there used to be Nagaswaram recitals from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m., with importance given to elaborate Raga Alapana. Later, it was Tiruppambaram Brothers who pioneered the singing of Kirtans.

I can also say with certainty that it is the Nagaswaram which promoted the growth and development of Raga music.

"During those days we students used to vie with one another to do service to our guru, such as washing his clothes and watering plants at his residence.

"I consider those days of my studentship as the golden period of my life. Despite his scholarship and eminence, my guru was a simple person. Let me give just one instance. Once at the Skanda Shashti festival at Tiruvidaimarudur, Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Iyer made an elaborate Alapana of Bhairavi Raga. After listening to it, my guru straightaway prostrated before Vaidyanatha Iyer and praised him saying, "Your Bhairavi has completely overwhelmed me". So simple was he.

First Lesson

"That incident taught me that one should unreservedly appreciate scholarship and skill whosoever possesses it. When I recollect such instances, I feel thrilled. Once Keevalur Ramachandra Bhagavata met me. He blessed me and said that I would have a bright future as a musician. I consider that it is because of the blessings of such good souls that I could gain mastery in music and make a name.

"Later, when my brother Semmangudi Narayanaswamy Iyer moved to Kumbakonam to do business in Khadi clothes, I followed to learn

music under him. Subsequently, I learnt music under Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer from 1925 to 1928. His son Santhanam was born during the period. He (Santhanam) virtually grew up on my lap. Viswanatha Iyer was so noble minded that he used to introduce me to the people who gathered for his concerts and arrange for my performances, too.

My Debut

"My debut was in the year 1927, at Nageswaraswamy Temple in Kumbhakonam, when I was nineteen. Later, in Chennai under the auspices of Indian National Congress, I performed for one hour in the morning (After my performance, Madurai Mani Iyer sang).

"In 1928, Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar kindly arranged for my concert at his native village in Kerala. In the same year, I had the good luck to sing at Tiruvaiyaru. Then I got many opportunities to give music concerts. I learnt many kirtanas from Shri Umayalpuram Swaminatha Iyer who was in the direct lineage of Saint Tyagaraja.

"Usually for my concerts, Kumbakonam Rajamanikkam Pillai used to give accompaniment on the violin and Umayalpuram Kothandarama Iyer on the mridangam (later on ghatam). I am glad to say that by giving encouragement, they were instrumental in raising me to the status in which I am today. Palakkad Mani Iyer, Dakshinamoorthy Pillai, Azhaganambi Pillai, and Pazhani Subramania Pillai have given percussion support for my performances.

Asthana Vidwan

"In 1939, my concert was arranged on the occasion of the 'Upanayanam' ceremony of the Prince of Travancore. I was made the Asthana Vidwan of Travancore State in 1939. In 1941 I was offered the Principalship of Swathi Thirunal Music College, (now renamed Swathi Thirunal Academy). When I conveyed this information to Poojya Sri Mahaswami of Kanchi (H. H. Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati), he blessed me and advised me saying, "Go and render this service". Thereafter, I accepted the offer.

At that time, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer was the Dewan of Travancore. He encouraged me and even permitted me to give outstation performances. The Maharaja of Travancore and his mother arranged for my concerts along with Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar. We used to sing even without the Tampura. I learnt a lot from Iyengar. I was in Thiruvananthapuram for 23 years, serving as Principal of the Music College. During those years in collaboration with Muthiah Bhagavathar, I published in book form 101 Kritis of Maharaja

Swathi Thirunal. This appeared in "The Swadesamithran".

"Once I accepted an invitation for giving a concert in Sri Lanka, but my father forbade my going abroad (crossing the sea was in those days a taboo). I had to drop the plan and give up once and for all my desire to cross the sea. Though I could not go abroad, some of my friends from North America came here and honoured me with titles at the Narada Gana Sabha, Chennai.

I served All India Radio, Madras, for three years (1957-1960). I am glad to say that Vidwans of three generations have given me instrumental support in my concerts.

Tribute to Parents

Before I end this article, I would like to say a few words about my parents. My venerable father used to chant Gayatri Mantra 1008 times every day. He passed away in 1940.

As I was born after my father had installed, at his expense, a 'Vigraha' (icon) at the Perumal Temple in our native place, Semmangudi, I was named Srinivasa as a token of gratitude to the Lord.

In memory of my father, I have arranged daily pujas in the morning in that temple, and as per my mother's desire, I have arranged for the conduct of pujas in the Tamil month of Margazhi (December-January) at the temple of Lord Siva in our place. I feel grateful that the Almighty has been gracious enough to use me as an instrument - *nimitta matram* for the successful conduct of the Kumbhabhishekam in the two temples.

As mentioned earlier, there was no school in my village for a long time, and hence I was denied schooling. This made me approach C. Subramaniam about 45 years ago (when he was Education and Finance Minister in the Government

of Madras under Rajaji's Chief Ministership) for the opening of a school. He was good enough to readily agree and to grant what I asked for. I need hardly say to the readers of 'Bhavan's Journal' that Rajaji, reputed as the "Conscience keeper" of Mahatma Gandhi, was not only an ardent patriot and scholar but a very able administrator. He is the first and possibly the only Chief Minister, I think, who entrusted the portfolios of Education and Finance to one minister to ensure adequate financial allotment for education. The school started with 16 students. It has now grown into a high school. I am very happy about this development.

I must not fail here to say something about Musiri Subramania Iyer, who guided me on many matters. He was so good as to perform concerts on my behalf whenever I was unable to do. Further, he was so noble as to tell me that it was enough if he was paid what was fixed for me (though it was small for his standing).

By God's grace, I have performed all over the country and received titles and awards from many Maharajas and Governments.

I must, in the end, thank whole-heartedly the Almighty who blessed me with the Satsanga of many godly and good people. It is this God-given Satsanga which "taught" me to be good and to do good, to be humble and compassionate, to avoid resorting to double-think and double-talk, and to be indifferent to praise and calumny. With all my limitations, it has been my endeavour to live up to these great ideals of our age old religion and culture. It is my constant prayer to God Almighty to bless me with the moral strength to resist the allurements and temptations that may crop up from time to time.

A Lesson in Compassion

I would like to narrate here one unforgettable episode which has left an indelible impression on my mind.

In the Ananthapadmanabhaswamy Temple at Thiruvananthapuram, Laksha Deepa Festival (a festival of lights) used to be celebrated once in six years. Huge thatched sheds used to be put up on the open space inside the temple premises and elephants were used to lift heavy wooden logs (pillars) and put them in the deep pits dug for the purpose. As they were trained for this purpose, the elephants used to do an excellent job of it.

Once an elephant, Chandrasekharan by name, lifted and brought a huge log, hesitated to plant it in the pit. The mahout's repeated goadings and other efforts were of no avail. Not knowing the reason, and tired of intimidating the animal, the mahout and others peeped into the pit. Lo! to their surprise, they found a cat lying inside. They immediately took the timid cat out of the pit, whereupon the elephant planted the log perfectly into the pit. I can never forget this compassion shown by the elephant towards that little creature.

It is from that pachyderm that I learnt the virtue of compassion and mercy and have tried to practise it in my life.

- Semmangudi

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The Art of Embar

"Would it not be really fitting if I were selected when I could stand on my own in pitch (Sruti) and performance?"

So reacted the veteran Harikatha exponent Embar Vijayaraghavachariar when he was informed of his being 'unanimously' selected for 'Sangita Kalanidhi' award of the Music Academy, Madras for the year 1982. He was 73 then.

"The last Harikatha Vidwan to preside over the Music Academy's conference was Brahmasri Mangudi Chidambara Bhagavathar who was conferred the honour in 1937. It is surprising that no other Harikatha Vidwan was chosen as the conference President till this year. Harikatha is also a form of music and there were many prominent exponents, both men and women, who might have been chosen for this honour..."

He remarked in his presidential address. He was never prepared to accept that Harikatha exponent was any different form, leave alone inferior to, a performing musician. On the contrary, he was a musician plus, he asserted.

"Harikatha is a musical form in which a story is narrated with the accompaniment of suitable musical compositions composed by renowned saint-composers. The exponent needs a musical perception for interpreting an episode, a melodious voice, a powerful idiom, knowledge of languages and literature. Besides he has to be a good musician with training in classical, light and folk music to an extent to make his art educative as well as entertaining."

True to his conviction Embar, towering as he was in physique as in performance with a stentorian voice, did make his art a complete education, making all people "Cultured even without being literate." One has only to recollect the *Tyagaraja Charithram* he expounded at Shanmukhananda in early eighties.

"Which is greater - Rama Himself or Rama Nama?" His tone of this poser of philosophic magnitude made the audience awestruck and dumb-founded. After a long pause, as if measuring the reaction of the audience, Embar went on to unfold the greatness of Rama Nama. *Smarane Sukham Sri Rama Nama* (Janaranjani) was the launch pad for his magnificent exploration. With lucid exposition, gripping anecdotes, episodes and upakathas, bringing the characters live through song-exposition, he substantiated his thesis and upheld that Rama Nama was greater.

That was the art of this Harikatha Chakravarthy.

- S. R.

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A Modern Day Guru (A Karma Yogi with A Difference)



"Karmayogi Krishnaswami"

Ranjani - Gayathri, the star products of Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya under the disciplined grooming of the veteran teacher Sangeetha Bhushanam T. S. Krishnaswami, made their Guru and Gurukul proud when they ascended the Pandal stage a few years ago and went on to conquer the hearts of the listeners with Violin.

The sisters may be called prodigies, born with art instincts and poised with performing grit. There is so much synchrony in their play and programming, in their dialogue and 'diction', yet they hold their individual command in their own way. And their Manodharma radiates their mettle. Teamed up with Arun Prakash on the Mridangam and Sriram Subbaraman, yet another Mridangist trained by Trichy Raghava Iyer at Bombay, playing the Kanjira at times, the sisters scaled new heights to the delight of their 'home' audience who had seen them grow in music.

They have turned out to be very polished, natural artistes seeking aesthetic beauty in every nuance they delve into. If there is a daring streak in the younger Gayathri, she is sure of success. The poised elder probes with certainty and with measured moves. No 'risks' in her sallies. The greatest advantage they have is both are fine vocalists and playing on violin what they would sing adds to the stringed melody a depth and diction that is to be relished and not written. And the way they complement each other while on Raga forays adds a tonal dimension that is spontaneous and splendid.

Born talent and inherent instincts apart, the disciplined grooming by the Guru has gone a long way in

shaping up what Ranjani - Gayatri are today in the performing forum. The Guru has groomed quite a number of musicians of mark both in violin and vocal, such as Meenakshi Viswanathan, Gowri Ramakrishnan, her daughter Visalakshi, Kalyani Panchapakesan, Mangala Vaidyanathan, Visalam Vageeswar (who is continuing the Guru's tradition in violin in Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya under whom another 'star' of the Guru Bani L. Ramakrishnan, is showing up promise); and Vijayalakshmi Nathan, Meenakshi Muralidhar besides his daughter as Vocalists.

Krishnaswami 'Sir' is a modern-day Guru, a Karma yogi with a difference. Teaching is his passion and a mission of life too. Moving with the times he improvised the teaching methodology picking out the principles of 'Gurukulavasa' and moulding them to institutionalised coaching. A Guru with a vision, one with over seven decades of experience he used catch words like 'picnic spots', (for swaras like Shadja and Panchama) and 'paying guests' (for notes that just show up in a Raga slightly [Alpatva] like the Gandhara and Nishada in Arabhi) to articulate and motivate students into the mysteries and munificence of music.

TSK has found these words immensely functional in capturing young minds into the ways of music.

"Use a jargon, technical or otherwise, students will run miles away from music. But introduce the technicalities through such catchwords and you have them with you, ever receptive and devoted to music", he said in an interview.

A purist-traditionist though he has been buoyed up with innovative ideas to 'capture' the young and take them in their own stride without their ever feeling the 'tedium' of learning classical music.

A Sangeetha Bhushanam from the Annamalai University of Sabesa Iyer's time (he graduated in 1934) T. S. K. has been the most sought after Guru in vocal and violin in Mumbai, which he made his home from forties to early nineties. Prior to that he had been in Delhi attached to the music school run by the Karnatak Sangeetha Sabha. After shifting to Mumbai he started his own Sri Krishna Music Academy in 1941 and followed the same method as Annamalai University and coached students in Vocal and Violin.

As one of his students of Sri Krishna Music Academy, a performing artiste, Meenakshi Muralidhar, reminisces:

We had classes six days in a week and senior students had evening sessions where Akaara Sadakam and Pallavi rendition were regularly practised. Saturdays were reserved for theory and examinations were periodically conducted. An institution of such discipline and magnitude was unknown in Bombay at that time. There were only a few teachers who gave private tuitions. The fee too in our Academy was meagre considering the intensive training that was imparted. Once a year the teachers and senior students performed at the annual day functions. It was a memorable experience. We students were also made to sing before vidwans who visited our school from time to time.

In 1974 Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha invited him to open a violin department and impart training in their Sangeetha Vidyalaya. He readily agreed and shifted there with all his students. The Sri Krishna Academy was wound up, but rose the Shanmukhananda violin faculty. His methodology, his systematic teaching, his patience, persuasion and perseverance in cultivating interest and knowledge in his students are matters for experience not for words. Never have I seen him losing his temper. Nor has he ever held back anything from us so far as teaching was concerned. He would impart every thing we wanted to know, irrespective of our capacity. He never differentiated between average and intelligent students. The attention he paid, the efforts he took, were the same to everyone. Mistakes were never left uncorrected. No relaxation until we got it perfect.

Each student had to sing or play Alapana, Niraval and Swaras individually after the lead he gave, and he would guide us, direct us as also correct us whenever and wherever necessary. That gave us not only the courage to sing alone but also by listening to our classmates rendering the same thing according to their imagination and musical acumen, helped us improve our own imagination. The collective build-up of Niraval and Swaras inspired us not only to strive for something original but also gave confidence to ensure rapport with the accompanists later on when we gave concerts. His comprehensive method of teaching, with the notation forming a necessary part of it, and a step by-step guidance at each stage had so firmly registered in our minds that when some of us later started teaching, the system came most natural to us.

His disciple 'successor' in Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya Visalam Vageeswar adds :

He composed his own 'Sadhaka exercise' of Swaras for practising vocally and instrumentally and initiated after Swarajati stage. This spruced up our Manodharma and helped us launch on Alapana, Kalpana Swaras without any hassles.

He would record students' playing of Niraval-Swaras in the class, without their knowledge and later play it back to them for listening. That was enough for us to recognise our mistakes and correct ourselves. No scolding, no harsh words.

What inspired the young graduate from Annamalai University to evolve a style of his own, a unique style of teaching at that and become a Karma yogi ?

A help for guidance and coaching sought by a classmate at Annamalai, who failed. It turned the perception and life of TSK: "It was rather a blessing in disguise", he once told this writer. It gave a stimulus to concretise ideas brimming in his young mind. Said he :

"I struck upon a three-phased approach to learning and practising music : (1) learning as the Guru teaches, 2) enjoying one's own rendition, and 3) analysing the melody, the nuances, diction and delineation of the Sahitya. I found vocal training a prerequisite for instrumentalists. Even today I guide my students on this formulae.

"Students are much more intelligent and talented today. There is greater awareness and interest in music. Opportunities to learn are aplenty. While tempting avenues of pop, film music etc., are no less. To draw them on to the classical music and guide them on the "Chakkani Rajamargamu" (the straight royal path) should be the prime duty of the teacher. I have been researching over the teaching methodology and came upon the catchwords, as they served my purpose of instilling into the students a knowledge of Ragas, Gamakas and musical phraseology without taxing their imagination and intelligence".

The most revolutionary of his convictions is his faith in institutional coaching. You can't provoke him. He disarms you with a deceptive smile darting a subtle retort!

Wasn't Saint Tyagaraja's a gurukula but with institutional teaching? Wasn't he composing and singing to a number of a students at a time? Were they not, each one, noting down what the guru sang? And have we not got the four famous schools of the saint's compositions from these notations?"

Living with the master and constant listening to his rendition besides learning and practising were the plus points of the gurukula. But could the same be assured of in part time teaching or modern group learning? I hesitantly question Why not?", He said. I have been teaching a group of students at a time, but I am not indifferent to their individual capabilities. I keep a watch over their individual receptivity, grasp and capacity to reproduce and correct them then and there. As for practising and imbibing the style, I teach a song and revise it continuously for a number of months, say about six months, so that the students get it in their blood streams".

Stressing that this needs immense patience, perseverance, dedication and discipline on the part of the teacher, he recalled an incident that occurred on the Second Anniversary of the Sri Krishna Music Academy (1943)

For the function he had invited the fiery journalist cum freedom fighter, 'Stalin' Srinivasan, a connoisseur of art and culture too, to preside over. A traditionalist to the core as far as our fine arts is concerned Srinivasan straightaway refused as he "did not believe in teaching music in groups, but only in gurukula type of individual training?" TSK pleaded with him to chair the function and express his frank opinion and assessment after listening to his students.

The recital comprised vocal and violin solos, duets ensembles with Raga Alapanas, Niraval and Swaras all performed in traditional format. It was not an assembly line art. There was individuality in the ensemble rendition. Clear it was that in group teaching the master's eyes and ears had not lost observation of individual talent and sensitivity. And that he exploited to the best. At the end of a 10-member ensemble rendition (vocal and violin) in unison Srinivasan rose and had the honesty and humility to take back his words, TSK says. "His misgivings gave way to a stunned experience."

Said Srinivasan :

"I told him when he invited me that I didn't believe in anything taught in groups. But I was simply stunned to see the standard produced within a couple of years in institutional teaching. Hats off to TSK".

"That is the greatest reward I cherish", says TSK with an emotional tinage. "I was able to convince and bring about a change of heart on a diehard conservative".

Why did he leave the performing field?

A performer only helps maintain the standard of music and art of presentation. It is the teacher who can perfect and perpetuate the art and science of music and pass it on to future generations. I wanted to impart what I imbibed in my family. I continue to research as I go on teaching.

And a teacher he remains, picking up words and plucking phrases to enthuse and educate his chelas. It is however an irony that such a teacher of eminence and erudition has still not caught the eye of any of our Akademies, central or state. He is 90! Settled in Chennai. Like Vadiyar Vadivel, made legendary by thespian Sahasranamam (of Seva Stage). T. S. Krishnaswami remains content as a 'ladder' for others to reach the top! Will the authorities wake up?

- Sulochana Rajendran

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A Quarterly Publication of
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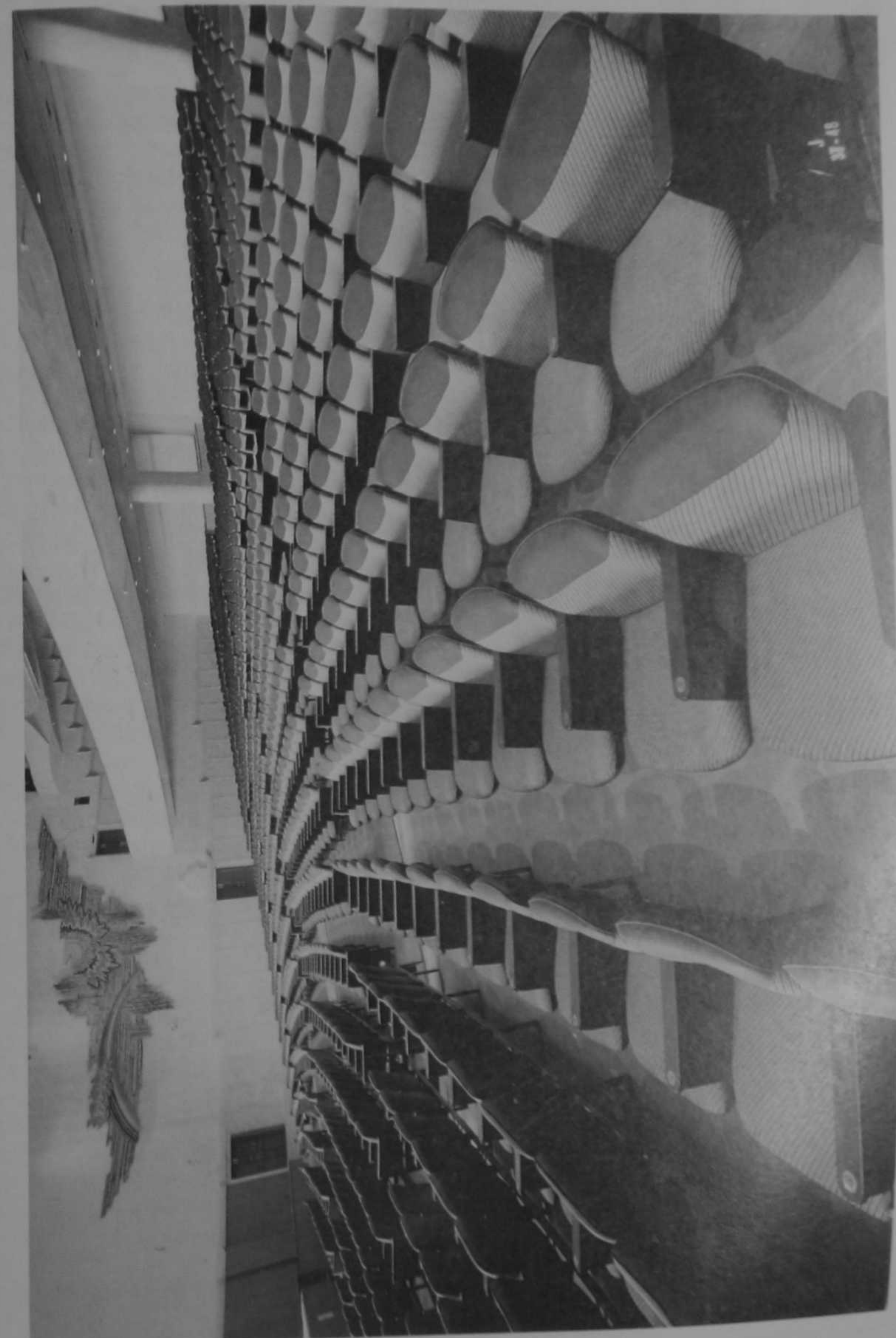
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MUSIC TRADITION WILL STAY ALIVE WITH AID OF TECHNOLOGY

BY N. Hariharan

The heritage arts are integral to Indian culture. Aesthetics blends with spirituality to elevate the human personality. In the pursuit of happiness, peace of mind, communion with the divine, the classical arts of music and dance, as also theatre, have been vital to the lives of the people. This has made them a living tradition transmitted from generation to generation. Advances in science and technology have only fortified the continuity of the traditional arts.

Technology has brought the arts to the homes of the people. The development of satellite television and multi-channel receivers has facilitated easy enjoyment of the arts. The practitioners of the arts get a massive audience simultaneously all over the country and abroad. The sharpness of colour transmission helps in bringing home the beauty of colourful costumes, adornments (jewellery) which add to the appeal of the dance performances.

The unifying factor in Indian society is culture. Not law as in West. Religion integrates with culture as a way of life. And music, which in India is believed to have originated from the Vedas, is closely linked with the lives of the people. It has a spiritual core which makes it a means to elevate one's spiritual personality.

Sheer listening to one singing the glories of the Lord, *shravanam*, (also playing the instruments dear to the deities), not only gives exaltation but is believed to lead to salvation. All the great composers have been divinely inspired; their works easily get set in melodic modes because the composers were also well versed in the grammar of music.

It is the innate spirituality in the repertoire that holds the attention of even the uninitiated lay listeners at classical music performances. The aesthetics-the tonal graces, the subtle melodic nuances, the microtones characteristic of Indian music, may be relished only by those who have cultivated a taste for it. Rhythm and melody are adornments to the lyrics; their themes, message, conveyed more impactfully in the idiom of music. So it goes without saying that Indian classical music is not for the busybody listener; it needs years of listening (of course, one must have the inclination for it) for one to appreciate well its niceties.

Lack of mass audiences at concerts, a popular lament these days of organisers of programmes, cannot

detract from the higher values enshrined in the classical arts, whose patrons will ever be the refined elite. The appeal of television, its addictive nature, which gives the TV receiver the nickname "idiot box", draws away a large number of people who used to be frequent concert-goers at the huge urban auditoria.

If one surveys the arts scenario of the past quarter century, the attendance at concert halls for programmes of music, dance drama would be noticed as steadily declining. The mass membership Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha used to have around 6000 members in the seventies with the same set of artistes performing on consecutive days, as the seating capacity was limited to around 3000. It was the only big watering hole for lovers of performing arts, though with a much less membership Bharatiya Music & Arts Society too existed.

With people in the suburbs forming new cultural organisations and organising cultural events, the membership of Shanmukhananda declined to nearly half, now staying perhaps at around 3000. The same set of artistes being presented at all the organisations within short intervals also told on the clientele of the big brother. Change is the only thing constant in the world, and society cannot but adapt to the changing scenario.

It is not all true that interest in Karnatic music or classical Indian dances is on the wane as is believed by some sections. The former chief election commissioner Sri T. N. Seshan, speaking recently at a function where the senior and junior pontiffs of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamigal and Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswathi Swamigal gave darshan and blessings to the large gathering in the Shanmukhananda Hall, pointed out that 1400 concerts were held in Chennai in the music season month of December 1999. The elder Sankaracharya stressed the role of music in getting closer to the Divinity and realising the inner Self. Study and propagation of music needs every encouragement, the seer stressed. Seshan himself is connected with a trust set up for cultural unity through the arts.

When 1400 Karnatic music events are organised in the same month at various spots in Chennai city, the attendance at each concert cannot but be small, particularly when several performing artistes presented by these organisations are the same. And the many television networks doing business in the city telecast the

performances video-taped at these December season concerts later on, which get them a mass viewer-listener clientele. The Doordarshan Kendra men are not worried at the small audience in the concert hall; if radio relays them live, the TV men can video-tape them and telecast them in different chunks.

If one were to view the music and dance performances telecast by the different television channels, one would notice the abundance of talent in the country. It is not the top artistes alone on whom the TV camera is focused; a multiplicity of fresh young talent is featured on the TV music and dance hour. And a good number of the younger generation performers do impress the discerning. No need to say artistes of fair sex have an advantage because of the high pitch quality of their voice and their looks. One gets to know of the potential of the new generation from the TV fare.

The connoisseurs and the office-bearers of the various Sabhas and fine arts societies may speak of their advantage in being able to give long-duration performances by senior artistes whereas Radio and Television can feature them only in short-duration chunks. But then, these days, the listening or viewing clientele have no time or inclination to spend more than two or three hours in a concert auditorium.

Gone are the days when the maestro Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer and his peers used to sing for five hours and more, the performance at times ending at midnight. Today even in Chennai, said to be the "mecca of music", few concerts exceed 2 1/2 hours duration. The fast pace of life of modern times and the unchecked growth of urbanisation cannot but affect the cultural scenario. However, those who are keenly interested do listen to or view the entire programme.

The concert hall brings the artistes face to face with the listening or viewing clientele; and they can draw inspiration from the audience response or establish rapport with them. Knowing this, the radio and TV stations too do organise public concerts, though of lesser duration.

The importance of Sabhas, cultural trusts, in preservation and propagation of the fine arts cannot be belittled despite the advance of the electronic media. They run music schools, hold competitions to reward or recognise the gifted learners; they hold both talent exposure and talent promotion performances which help sustain interest in the arts.

The electronic media are only entertainment-oriented and depend on advertising revenue for their programme activities. It is because of the TV watchers'

interest that the media men give engagements to the classical music and dance artistes as also cover the cultural festivals. Advertisers also support with sponsorship for mutual benefit. Their commercial interest cannot be overlooked in the cause of altruism.

The cassette recording ventures thrive only by selling the artistes' popularity. These long playing cassettes, often recorded at prestigious music festivals besides in their studios, are marketed abroad too where Indians live in large numbers. NRIs fund some music festivals in the South; and some organisations hold an annual festival where NRI artistes are the predominant if not exclusive participants. A speciality of the Indian people is that they try to hold on to their culture even while settled abroad. Wherever they are settled in large numbers, they form their own cultural associations and keep links with their native culture.

This laudable trait is helpful in keeping alive the traditional arts. Migration of Indian artistes to the U. S., Canada has spread awareness of our classical music and dance abroad. A good number of the top or popular performing artistes visit foreign countries and benefit from the cultural exchanges.

Even though conservative sections may not condone tampering with the purity of the classical art forms in the name of innovation, creativity, fusion with other cultures, they help in the interaction of the artistes (musicians) of East and West. By creating awareness of our cultural forms by our overseas artistes foreigners too have come forward to learn our music and dance in the traditional way from the famed erudite gurus.

No survey of the cultural scenario can be complete without decrying the crass commercialisation of culture by some sections, both sponsors and performers. Charitable cultural trusts founded for promoting education in the arts and for giving encouragement to the performing artistes, should aim to serve the largest number of performing artistes and eschew a commercial approach in their activities.

Some sabha-trust secretaries say they will not give engagement to any veena artiste as they have to remunerate them in the same way as a vocalist, with a lesser number of listeners than for a vocalist. All talk of the Veena as Goddess Saraswathi's own instrument and the most ancient of Indian musical instruments sounds hypocritical when performers of the instrument are denied opportunities quoting commerce as the reason. The true love of classical music cannot ignore them. The fee demand of the famed should be attuned to paying capacity of the organisers of performances.

Indian Music in the Twentyfirst Century

(In the Perspective of World Music)

By Dr. Vidyadhar Vyas

In a matter of few years the 20th century will become history * and we will enter into the 21st century with new hopes, new dimensions, new possibilities of the dynamics of human culture. Change is the password of our arts and culture; nevertheless the time-tested vital basic norms and principles of our art systems, remain the foundation and backbone of our culture. Twentieth century and especially the latter half of it has seen the breakthrough in communication and media technology which has given the art and culture systems including music, a whole new dimension. This perspective will certainly develop in the new century and we may see many facets flourishing with immense possibilities. Let us try to see how Indian music might face the coming century.

Music is natural instinct to human beings. Human cultures, societies are dominated by music and music forms a very vital aspect of the life of human beings and their societies. Just as human societies are distinguished by features such as colour, looks language and culture, so is music. Understanding music is a key to understanding the culture and nature of people in a society.

This understanding of the music of different culture is the basis of the concept of World Music.

Music has certain definitive basic characteristics common to all. Music deals with and is made of sound, rhythm and the composition of these two ingredients. Music is sung (through human throat) and played (through instruments). All music can be categorized in 1) Folk 2) Cultured (Classical) and 3) Modern popular (Pop). These are not exclusive and independent categories; there are also in-between areas.

Major Music System

The major music systems that we find in the world are 1) Western Music, 2) Music of Middle East (Arabic, Persian), 3) African Music, 4) Indian Music, 5) Chinese,

Japanese Music, and 6) Music of South East Asia (Javanese, Indonesian). Till about the middle of 20th century, the concept of World Music did not really emerge. The mobility of individuals and societies was not much and the contact among the societies and cultures was limited. The world was more or less dominated by the West and a kind of Western Cultural Ego prevailed. Music and culture other than Western was considered undeveloped and ethnic. This Western cultural superiority complex began getting questioned with the emergence into focus of the other cultures and music systems.

The British rule of about 150 years in India did not bring Western and Indian Music close although some efforts of understanding the other music did take place. The Indian independence induced the musicians to assert themselves culturally in the world context and they began touring and taking their music to different parts of the world. Musicians and students of non-Indian music began getting interested in Indian music and their work and study seemed to have given a new dimension to the performance and spread of Indian Music.

Concept of World Music

The 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed the export of Indian population mainly in the form of labourers, to work in the vast agricultural fields in the West. They took with them their culture, music and as the years passed by the next generations of this settled Indian population strived to learn Indian Music in the countries they settled in. Western countries were soon becoming multi-cultural societies. This was the seed and the beginning of the concept of World Music. With the advancement of transport facilities, breakthrough in communication and media technology, the areas of exposure, interaction, assimilation and influence expanded, which required the increased understanding of different music systems.

The Western superiority phobia was receding and the process of understanding in right earnest began setting in. This certainly gave a boost to the concept of World Music.

India has not been a multi-cultural, society the way we find in the West. The concept of World Music has yet to take root in India. In India, however, we find two music systems. Relatively speaking, few musicians have an understanding of and a fewer an expertise in, both the systems, Indian musicians have not really started looking out at other music systems in the world.

But the situation is changing fast and India cannot remain out from the emerging domain of World Music. The World is shrinking, Inter cultural studies are becoming necessary and India, with its very strong foundation of a well-developed music system can stand to benefit and lead in this emerging area of World Music. This will be a major task for Indian music in the 21st century.

Indian music with its spread outside the shores of India is destined to take a lead in the development of World Music. Institutions or Centres of World Music studies must come up in India and the Indian musicians with the expertise at their command must guide the course of World Music development in the 21st Century.

A typical centre for World Music should provide inter cultural study of music as all its forms. As mentioned before, music has three major categories :

1. Folk 2) Cultured (Classical) and 3. Modern Popular (Pop). Folk music is always traditional, a spontaneous social cultural expression in the context of any event. It may be good harvest, social duties and gatherings, religious rituals, family events such as child birth, marriage

and even death, festivities, etc. Folk music is performed in groups, small or large.

Folk instruments are also simple, easy to play and have a characteristic rustic flavour.

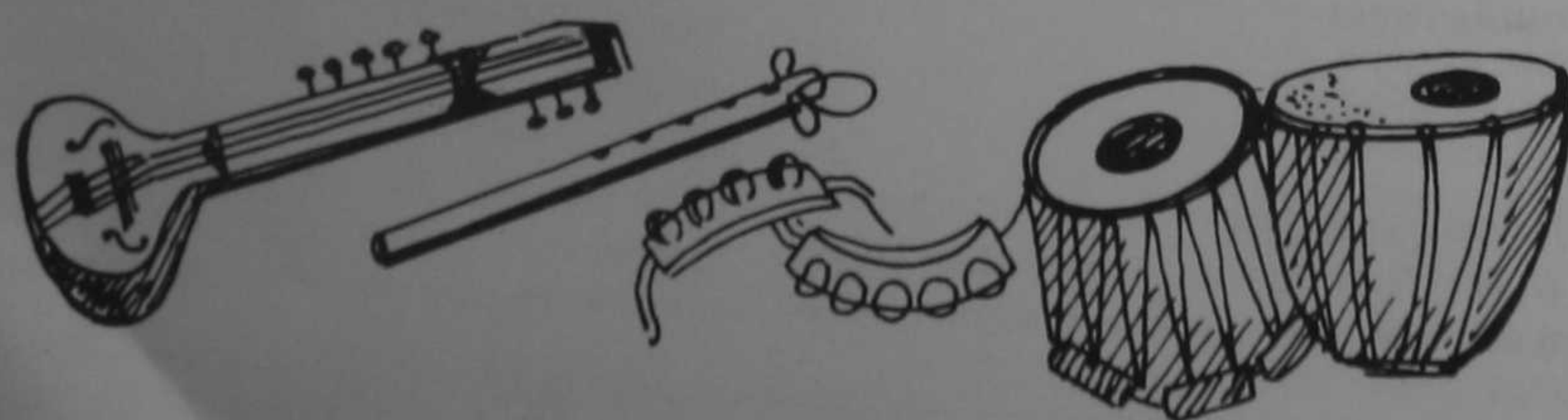
Classical Music - Individualistic

Cultured or classical music is always sophisticated, follows certain norms, specific rules and is based on item-tested experimented basics of aesthetics and expressions. The fabrication of classical music is logical, scientific and aims at preset achievement. Indian classical music is performed mainly in an individual way, one individual performing and two to four accompanists following the main performer. There may be duet performances, but the music is mainly individualistic melody. Group, choral music is not traditional or characteristic to Indian Classical Music. Western Classical music is, on the other hand, a group activity; large orchestra, big chorus groups, operas, etc. Individual performances are very few.

Modern popular music is a new creation and is a free expression of musical ideas. It synthesizes, borrows, creates, experiments and improvises music. It may follow any music tradition and may not adhere to its rules.

The Centre for World Music may provide facilities to study different systems of music of the world, offer scope for comparative studies, provide expertise for quality performance training in each music system and encourage experimentation. It should work with the world overview of music - an interesting interplay of sound and rhythm interspersed with silence.

- Courtesy : "Nadabrahama Mandir"
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Interview**Flute Maestro - Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia**

The greatest living master of the North Indian bamboo flute - Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia - surprisingly does not hail from a family of musicians. He sought this path himself and has rightfully earned the credit for popularising this little instrument through Hindustani Classical Music, at home and abroad.

He started learning vocal music at the age of 15 from Pt. Rajaram. But when he heard Pt. Bholanath - a noted flautist from Varanasi - switched over to this delicate instrument and underwent training under him for nearly 8 years. He later joined A. I. R. Cuttack (Orissa) as a regular staffer and then was transferred to A.I.R. Bombay when he came under the guidance of Surbahar player Smt. Annapura Devi. He ultimately left his job to seriously pursue his music career. Since then he has never looked back. He has conquered the dais both nationally and internationally, winning many laurels to his credit, not only from discerning listeners but from top musicians like Yehudi Menuhin and Jean - Pierre Rampal. He won the Sangeet Natak Akademy Award in 1984, the Maharashtra Gaurav Puraskar in 1990, the Konark Samman Award (Orissa State Government)

and the Padma Bhushan in 1992, the Yash Bharati Sanman from the Uttar Pradesh Government in 1994, the Kalidas Samman Award from Madhya Pradesh Government in 1999 and the Ustad Hafiz Ali Khan Award, bestowed upon him on the 31st January 2000. Now he is the proud recipient of the nation's second highest civilian award - Padma Vibhushan, conferred upon him on the 26th of January 2000, on the occasion of our 51st Republic Day.

Pt. Chaurasia's horizon is not limited to North Indian Classical music alone but spreads its wings to Indian Folk Music and to Western Music as well. The musical numbers in the famous film - *Silsila* - which he collaborated with the Santoor wizard Pt. Shiv Kumar Sharma won a platinum disc in India, as also his experimental album - *'Eternity'*, which involved many Western elements alongside North Indian Classical ones. He also featured in the United States Festival of India in 1985.

Though he tours extensively in the U.S. and Europe, he is a serious teacher with several of his students making a mark on the concert platform.

A very simple man with no airs, following is a pleasant interview session I had with him at his residence.

How were you initiated into music and what made you choose the flute as your instrument ?

I took to music out of my own interest as I do not hail from a family of musicians. I was attracted to the flute mainly because it looked very simple and adorned Lord Krishna's hands.

Which is your best award?

A discerning audience is my best award. Every single performance is a great event for me. I always go to the stage thinking of my only that day's programme as my first and last as nobody knows the future.

What is your experience with the audiences at home and abroad-do you find any difference between the two?

I find that both appreciate our classical music in their own styles. Our home audience appreciate with lustful 'wah-wahs'. The Western classical music lovers hear with 'Shanti', while the jazz lovers dance in ecstasy.

Karnatic music has compositions set up by age - old composers like the Trinity, for example, which are handled by both our vocalists and instrumentalists. Is it similar in your system or do you have Bandishes for Vocalists and mere Gat or notes for instruments ?

We too have compositions by great composers like Vishnu Digamber, Swami Haridas, Bhatkande, etc. So we instrumentalists also play Bandishes. Yet at the same time we give more scope to creative music. Thus you may find that our music is more original and attains a greater individualistic tone as each artiste - vocalist or instrumentalist - is given full freedom to sing or play music that is creative.

Can you please explain how Hindustani Ragas are developed ? Do they emanate from scales or Bandishes ?

We have 10 main Thaats from which our smaller Ragas branch out. Our Ragas hence emanate from scales and Raga 'swarop'. But whilst we too strictly adhere to the particular Thaat scale, we do allow alien Swaras for the sake of Ranjakatwa as we believe that music is for the ears. For such Ragas we use the term - 'Mishra' - before their particular names.

Is knowledge of Tabla a must for a Hindustani classical artiste as you never show finger count whilst performing ?

We are taught our music along with the Tabla accompaniment. Since we also learn the Tabla 'bol' at the same time, we do not need to count the Tala beats on our fingers.

You have different Gharanas. How do you classify them ? Do any differences exist between them ?

Gharanas came into existence during the Mughal period and has continued to the present day. Basically there is no difference between any two Gharanas. Also students are free to shift from one Gharana to another.

What difference do you see between Karnatic and Hindustani music ?

Our music is 'Sur' based. Thus we elaborate on a single Raga for even more than an hour. In our concerts which may range from two to three or four hours, we hardly take up two or three Ragas. But Karnatic music is 'rhythm' based. Thus I have observed that you render a wide number of compositions and Ragas in every concert.

Against this observation, what do you feel about a 'jugalbandhi'? Is it one way of introducing the two systems on the same stage to a combined audience? Also what do you feel about a vocal - instrumental jugalbandhi as presented by yourself and Dr. Balamurali Krishna in 'Sangam'.

Jugalbandhi is a successful venture so long as the minds of the two artistes relate with one another as only then there will be harmony. But if each tries to outdo the other, there will only be competition.

I had a great experience playing along with Dr. Balamurali Krishna as we rendered our music in our own style without vying with each other. It makes no difference if it is a vocal - vocal, instrument-instrument or vocal-instrument jugalbandhi. It should lead to an exchange of musical ideas and thoughts without bias and both the audiences should enjoy.

What is your opinion on 'fusion' music ? Is it a technically feasible venture ?

I have never understood why the term 'fusion' is used. I am definitely not against it. But I would like to call it a 'musical meet'. We are not interested in projecting our Indian classical music to the Westerners by fusing our system with theirs. All that we do is play our music in our style while they also play their music in their style but on the same stage. Hence this is actually a musical meet or 'sangeeth charcha'. Here too like in our jugalbandhi, we can take some ideas from them and improvise. After all, though Western classical is set music, Western jazz has a lot of creativity in it and these musicians also play extempore sometimes.

But unfortunately, instead of taking what is good from them, we have allowed ourselves to be impressed upon by them. Like even in our mannerisms we have tried to ape the West whilst they have stuck to their ways of behaviour.

Then, do you approve of the introduction of Western instruments like the Guitar, Mandolin, etc., into our classical music or would you prefer improving on our traditional instruments ?

We have allowed English instruments into our classical field not realising that these cannot bring out our Meend or Gamakas to the fullest extent. After all, the spinal cord of our Indian classical music is our Meend. I have always felt that we should take good ideas from them and improvise on our traditional instruments. The West has not taken to our instruments - have they ? It is sad that we have fallen a prey to them. God has made the Westerners fair and any amount of sun-bath is not going to make them dark. We have been created dark so any amount of scrubbing is not going to make us white. In the same way, our Indian instruments are designed for our Gamaka - oriented music. We should try to improve on what we have instead of falling a prey to the West. Unfortunately we will be the losers, not they.

For, really speaking, we are only trying to prove that we can play our music on their instruments. This is not a sign of progress or improvement. What do we gain by simply proving ? Instead, why not do 'Riaz', research and further improve on our own instruments ?

You have started a Sangeeth Ashram. Can you say something about it?

My Ashram is called - 'Vrindawan Gurukul' and is located at Juhu - Parle sector. It is totally on the old Gurukulam style where the Guru is more like a parent. My 20 - 25 students have literally been adopted by me. Food, clothing and shelter is provided free and I do not charge any fees. The only qualification for entry is talent, a musical mind and total surrender to the world of music. Also, the enrolled student cannot take up any other curriculum apart from music. I have started this as my dream project and I am very grateful to people like the Tatas who have extended their support to help me realise this dream. My main aim is to revive the old Gurukul system and encourage the students to totally submerge themselves in music with no other side distractions.

We also have programmes by invited artistes for the sake of our students. Also, on the 14th of November every year, we have children's programme in which young talents from outside are given the dais to perform. Entry is free and open to all interested public.

What is your vision of our classical music in the future ? What would you like to advise the present generation of students ?

Our classical music was always, is always and will always be grand. Initially it was appreciated within our Indian boundary. Now it has crossed the frontiers and is appreciated throughout the world. Our tradition will never die, so our classical music will reign supreme forever.

My advice to the younger generation is - always be with music either as a student or at least as a listener. Without music there is no charm in life. Music alone will keep one physically, mentally and medically fit. In my experience, I have always found that personality shows on the face of a musician. One can easily see a glow, an expression of serenity and calm on a true musician's face as he / she is closer to God. Such a glow will be missing in a common man with total lack of interest in music.

- Lalitha A. Bharadwaj

Cultural Scene in Mumbai

'A Great Prelude to Golden Era'

Annamacharya, the Pada Kavita Pithamaha, no doubt, was a Vaggeyakara of 15th century when Bhajana tradition was predominant. His outpourings of Keertanas, preserved in copper plates found in Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam, came to light only a few decades back. Nevertheless their poetic excellence, their Bhakti Bhava, their melodic potentialities and their inherent classical aesthetics are in no way inferior to the creations of the Golden Era. It is in the musicians to explore the 'Sangeeta Kavita and Sahitya Madhurya' in Annamayya's Sankeertanas and present them with the classical aesthetics, elevating them thus to the status of Kriti.

The magnificent service that Sangitha Kalanidhi Nedunuri Krishnamoorthy has rendered to the Pada Kavita Pithamaha, history will never forget. Not resting with exploring and tuning alone, he has brought them on to performing forum in a full-fledged classical Margam.

A 3-hour recital of "Annamacharya Keertanas"? Rasikas questioned. Could mere Sankeertana sustain in a solo concert? Audience was in for a surprise. The Sangeethanjali organised by Shanmukhananda jointly with the Annamacharya Cultural Centre on the Vaggeyakara's Punya Thithi turned out to be not merely an Anjali to the Savant but an eye-opener to musicians and music-lovers on the potential inherent in these compositions for a classical concert. With his total involvement in the Sahitya and Sangeetha Nedunuri brought out these inherent potential in his concert on April 1.

From sprightly splendid stride (till a few years back) to the Sathvik Sowkya Vilambam today, Nedunuri's music has been one stream reflecting the rich aesthetic sensibilities and evocative munificence of our classical music. "Sarvalaghu Saukhyam" has been his forte, but with built-in intricacy both in melody and rhythm. The Sancharas in Alapana, the Prastharas in Kalpana Swaras in the concert made a totality of Raga image, a veritable education to the students on these Manodharma facets and a fulfilling cutcheri to the listeners.

Opening with the familiar *Vandeham Jagat Vallabham* (Hamsadhwani) studded with Swaras of rhythmic *Sravyam*, Nedunuri proceeded with

Bhavamulona (Suddha Dhanyasi), *Sakala Santhikaramu Sarvesa* (Bahudari), *Gummani* (Purvikalyani), *Sadanandamu* (Kharaharapriya), *Ramachandra* (Dwijawanti), *Palukute* (Bhimplas) and *Muddugare Yashoda*.

Alapanas of Suddha Dhanyasi and Kharaharapriya were a class by themselves, marked for fertile imagination and facility of delineation, each a model prelude to the composition that was to follow. If Suddha Dhanyasi was invested with devotional fervour, Kharaharapriya had an added dimension of extensive artistic build-up. Structured with measured phrases starting from short crisp one gradually moving on to elongated Sancharas, the build-up projected the pivotal notes, the multifarious Sancharas that could be melodiously woven around with evocative pauses, and the majestic finale with absolute Saukhyam. A model for the youngsters to emulate. So was the composition, call it a Keertana or Kriti, *Sadanandamu*, with the Niraval at *Nayamagu Shraavananandamu* and *Swaraprasthara* - spin up that was a great pleasure and education.

He kept his accompanists on toes weaving *Swaraprastharas* of short-strips and *Sarvalaghu* permutations in quick succession, that opened up the wonderful vistas of permutations and combinations. The sessions of *Swaraprastharas* for Suddha Dhanyasi, Bahudari and Kharaharapriya in themselves were a segment so satiating, not to speak of Alapana and Kriti-rendition.

K. Sivakumar on the Violin settled into the Vocalist's stream after initial hesitation, may be due to low Sruti. His participation in Suddha Dhanyasi, Kharaharapriya was remarkable. T. S. Nandakumar (Mridangam) finely followed the veteran's pace with certain precise anticipation and soft strides. His Thani (in Kharaharapriya) was a crisp, intricate essay.

Was he reminiscing, recapitulating the heyday of that versatile Brikka maestro GNB or going the whole hog reproducing him? Rasikas' impression was that Sriram Gangadhar just revelled in reproducing the great master. The impression was not wrong for save

Kaarubaaru (Mukhari) which spoke of his ease with Vilambam, the rest was all music of swirls and whirls, a show of skills and vocal gyrations. With his present control over the voice, the energy he exuded and the fine sense of Sruti the programme (March 2000) was exciting and entertaining. *Manasa Etulo* (Malayamarutham), *Amma Ravamma* (Kalyani), *Sevikka Vendumayya* (Andolika), Todi in Ragam, Tanam, Pallavi suite all marked with fluency was typically in the master's Bani. The alapanas of Kalyani and Todi in the varja vivacity, their fluency, frescoed finesse were all good. That he has done his riyaz rigorously goes without saying. But the one Vilamba piece, *Kaarubaaru* though slightly towards Madhyama pace exuded all the charm of the pause-filled Vilambam, the Visranti with an impact of its own and Sriram's capacity for a sustaining style. Would Sriram explore this avenue further to his advantage?

The concert was marked for its good team spirit - H. N. Bhaskar on Violin, Poongulam Subramaniam (Mridangam) and Kartik (Ghatam) - all revelling in the great master's style and playing with grit and gusto.

Another concert of spirited youth team was that of T. M. Krishna (Feb 12) with Lakshminarayan (Violin), Arun Prakash (Mridangam) and Purushoththaman (Kanjira). A concert that toed the Sampradayaic path, in a well-nourished Vilambam, presenting expansive Alapana dotted with 'Dheerga Kaarvais' and felicitous melodic flow. Good voice slightly with a nasal twang was an asset and he sang with the feel of the song.

Sankarabharanam was well-tempered with aesthetics and even the standard phrases came off with their subtle beauty. *Enduku peddalavale* in Vilambam was a listeners' pleasure and Niraval and Swaras for *Veda Shastra Tatvaarthamulu Delisi* were meaningful. Here is an artiste who is carving his own style and may progress into a second - liner.

One cherished the Tani. Arun Prakash's (Mridangam) intricate strokes with tonal softness and Purushoththaman's (Kanjira) rhythmic spin-up in tone-modulation made the rhythmic essay not just a percussion interlude but an extension of the Sankarabharanam suite. Dikshitar's *Mamava Pattabhirama* (Manirangu) and *Idu daane Tillaisthalam* (Behag) were other highlights.

* * * * *

Another Vaggeyakara Day which was celebrated with a full-fledged Hindustani vocal concert was that of Pt. Vishnu Digambar Paluskar and Pt. Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, (March 19). Asha Khadilkar, a renowned artiste paid her Sangeethanjali to the Savants.

Endowed with a sweet, melodious voice and dedicated to music, both classical and semi-classical including Natya Sangeet, Asha has been fortunate to have undergone training at the feet of many stalwart Gurus, such as, Pt. Balakrishnabuvu Mohite, Manik Varma, Pt. Yashwant buva Joshi of Gwalior Gharana and Pt. Shankar Rao Abhayankar. And her professional career has been, needless to say, one of steady ascent in which she had the guidance of Dr. Vamanrao Deshpande and Pt. Jitendra Abhisheki.

Asha Khadilkar is one of the few who sings with a flair for the lyrics, be it a Khayal or a Bhajan, whose accent of Bols is clear and who sings with the feel for the Raga Bhava and Sahitya Bhava. She chose two Ragas for major delineation - Marwa and Bhoop specifically for the concert as these two gained their presentational norms from the great path-finders Paluskar and Bhatkhande. The opening Marwa was very imposing, presenting the Raga in a nutshell. The delineation moulded in an Anjali to the Vaggeyakaras, the Almighty and the Muse was perceptible as she geared the Bandish *Toohi Jagadaata Tero Mana Japatha*, a traditional number. Every step in the build-up of Bol Alap reverberated with the mood and when she reached Tara Shadja in *Krupaanidhi* after phrasing through many Shadja-Varja avenues, one was transported to an ethereal world.

The measured Vilambit helped her conserve enough energy and ebullience for the fast darts of Gamak Taans and Brikka Bols.

Aaj Sab Mile Ave Gaavo in Drut revealed the classical vitality and devotional fervour in the rendition.

Next was Bhoop wherein her amazing command of voice, its mellifluity, powerful range, pliability etc came into full play. The Bandishes in Vilambit and Drut were impressive, especially the Drut in Gamak - Chalan. The very structure had this inherent beauty artistically woven. Hori, Hamsadhwani, Bhairavi were all excellent expositions and the Natya Sangeet *Vaikunta Chelaya* rose to classical stature.

The team concept in the concert was exemplary. Seema Shirodkar's Sangat on Harmonium was not just 'Keeping Sangat' but playing Sangeet. Her Bhoop where she almost reproduced Vocalist's Bol Taans spoke of her prowess. It was also a fine gesture on the part of the main artiste to allow full-stream sangat to a Harmonist. Viswanath Shirodkar's Tabla was marked for inspiring fluency.

The other Vaggeyakara Days such as Saint Tyagaraja Aradhana, and Sangeethanjalis to Purandara Dasa, Syama Sastri and Papanasam Sivan were celebrated by giving exposure to many a teenage talent besides amateur exponents. Quite some fresh talents could be scouted from this Anjali concerts. One who stood outstanding with resonant voice and rare repertoire was M. H. Krishnan who paid homage to Purandara Dasa. Here is a talent, a Chela of Alamelu Mani, who could go a long way in professionalism if he trained intensively and practised regularly.

Another was V. Ramaswamy, a talent already made mark and featured in Talent Promotion Programme, who rendered Syama Sastri's rare *Mayamma* (Natakuranji) and Todi Swarajati.

Accompanying both was L. Ramakrishnan on the violin, a budding star of the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya. Being trained under Visalam Vageeswar he marvels in the 'Guru Bani' of 'Karma Yogi' T. S. Krishnaswami. He created waves a year ago in Talent Exposure concerts (organised for the Vidyalaya students), dueted with his classmate S. Sudarshan, and recently was picked up by Kanyakumari for her "Satavadya Sammelanam" a grand Musical Presentation of 100 instruments under the aegis of Mylapore Fine Arts to herald the New Year / Century / Millennium.

Ramakrishnan's art instinct is something in-born his grasp instant, and he brims with originality. His talent

is being nurtured in the right direction with caution and care by his Guru Visalam (a disciple of T. S. Krishnaswamy) who is known for her disciplined, painstaking coaching. Ramakrishnan's one-hour solo at the Balaji Bhakta Darshan's annual 'Vanamahotsava' before Lord Balaji towards the close of January could verily be called his Arangetram.

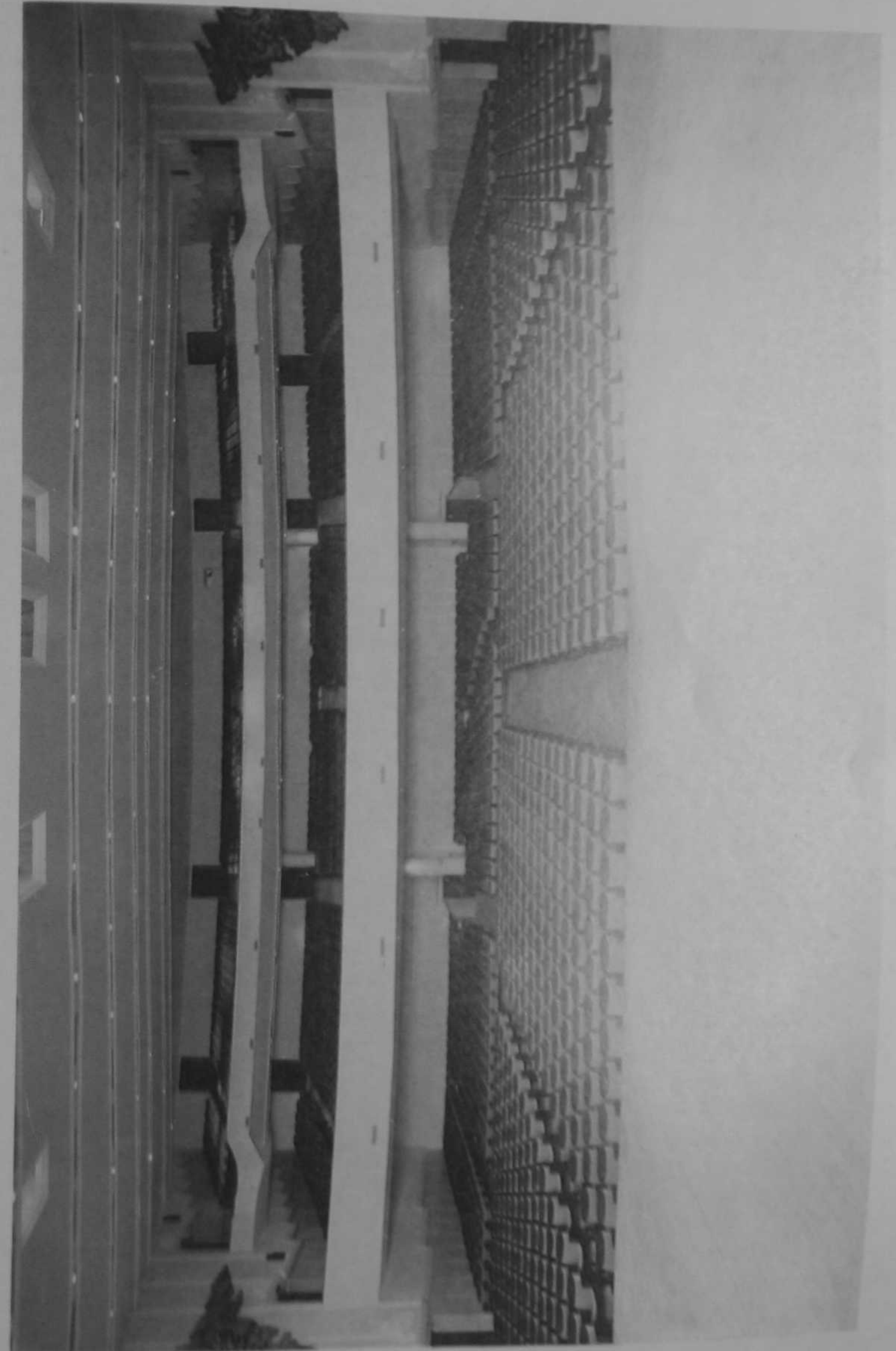
His bowing was soft; his fingering fluent and there was a deflexive grace in his play. The streak of originality that he displayed now and then may turn individualistic with intuitive perception and discreet delineation. His Hamsadhwani (*Vandeham*), Begada (*Anudinamunu*) *Marivere* (Shanmukhapriya) were all played with relish, the Alapana and Swaraprastharas showed his zest for exploring Sancharas both standard and off-beat. A star worth watching.

He was inspiringly accompanied on the Mridangam by K. Kumar (a senior student training under T. S. Nandakumar, a much sought after teacher).

The celebration of Mahakavi Subramanya Bhartiyar's 117th birthday was exclusively by the students of the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya in (February). About fiftyfive students under the guidance and direction of over eight teachers paid their Anjali singing the songs of the national patriot poet. It was a moment of satisfaction to those involved in the production.

Amidst the chants of *Jaya Jaya Sankara Hara Hara Sankara*, His Holiness Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal and Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati Swamigal graced the Sabha (on February 14) and blessed the organisation for its multi-faceted activities. There was a special concert on the occasion by Maharajapuram Srinivasan and his son Ganesan. The youngster was initiated into the performing stream with the blessings of the Pontiffs.

- KINNARI



A view of the Auditorium

Sruti, Where Art Thou?

Srutih Mata Layah Pitah is an age-old adage. Both these vital elements should fuse gloriously in one's approach which results from an interpreted vision of music. These are indeed indispensable when the subject of musical feeling and melodic purity is discussed.

But today it is painful to witness competent musicians - senior or junior, (who are capable of successful advocacy of classical rules) falter, and they are found wanting in these vantage areas. Or, are these musicians freeing themselves from the burden of producing sensitive music, making it thus sound meagre, as sensitive music demands total involvement, wherein both the mental and physical element is involved?

The Sruti virtue is what breath is to life. It is the paramount principle on which the musical value prospers. There is an impression that Karnatic musicians have assigned Sruti a much inferior position in order of musical priorities. The consequence of this has been disastrous.

Voice culture is a prime feature of Hindustani music. Sruti consciousness is foremost in the mind whenever they perform, unmindful of the place, time and occasion. Musical feeling, melodic purity and tonal virtuosity thrives only when Sruti fidelity is given the importance due to it. Here one must compliment the Hindustani musicians. They are very particular. The slightest Sruti lapse is virtually unpardonable for them.

But Karnatic musicians seem to be least perturbed. They instead claim that our music presents a very difficult terrain and it is difficult while traversing it to practise adherence to Sruti with perfection. Sruti is thus left neglected, but on the contrary it exposes the unnourished tone. In fact, this is clearly directed towards one's deficiency and impairs musical capability.

Aesthetics thus positively comes down the order in the list of priorities. Exhibitionism has become today's musical jargon. Glamour is all that the eyes see, and the ears have fallen prey to pyrotechnics and gimmicks, both of which have become predominant in the so, called musical treat offered today.

Will aesthetic sense ever get elevated in the order of preferences? One admits that Manodharma

Sangeetham occupies a major portion in musical delineation, but what is the use, if aesthetics does not surface in bold relief in the artist's interpretation of musical vision?

Artists today also indulge excessively in Swaraprastharas. Tyranny of Swaras would be a more appropriate term, if I may use it. The musician's exhibition of skill, pursuit of a method of rhythmic explicitness and emphasis, temptation to overindulge at times, ends up in havoc leaving Sukha Bhava to naught. One of the main casualties in the process is Sruti. Once this vision of Sruti is lost, be it consciously or unconsciously, the music's stability is bound to suffer.

Thus sublime levels of excellence are not ascended primarily on account of the smug satisfaction which musicians derive from attainments which are lesser in degree. Idealism should be strictly adhered to in classical music, but it is not a feature of today's music and is not welcomed by many Rasikas and the musician's fraternity too. This only goes to prove that professional music and idealism cannot combine successfully and thrive in today's music concert platforms.

It is a pity that even musicians capable of great music and advocacy to idealism do not pay adequate attention and fail to fulfil this noble mission with commitment. They tend to give a glimpse of this sensitivity in patches, and instead time and again justify, highlighting the enormous mental and physical effort as also the strain involved in producing music of the highest order. The audience, thus not exposed to real music, is in fact projected the diluted version of the deep springs from which profundity flows.

It is but true that the clear melodic accent and deep Gamaka culture of our music, expects a lot from the practitioner - on Sruti consciousness too. But it must be stated, that this lapse has not been that grave in those musicians who take care to see that their voice movements abide to Gayaka dharma unlike other musicians who have ignored to harness the tone to classical excellence and have instead succumbed to the temptation of propagating cheaper techniques to please the audience and win acclaim. These exercises have unfortunately been accepted and have become popular on the claim that music is full of variety and vitality. These may be hailed

as delightful music but if analysed very closely is erratic in respect of Sruti cohesion. The musicians should also realise that they are misleading the listener.

Emphasis on excessive rhythm and Brika forays is one of the prime reasons which spoils the voice and in the process impairs its musical capability. This titillating general effect along with dynamic drum collaboration plus undue amplification drowns the music. The Cutcheri concept today has started emphasising Laya and artificial ornamentation at the cost of melody. Quietitude and the serene effect can be evoked only by lucidity of tone, a virtue that can be possessed only through deep Sruti consciousness and fidelity to refined techniques of musical modulation. Sound production has to be very straightforward if the tone has to be musically employed to present the beauty of classical music. Substance alone cannot be made musically attractive. And at the same time will our musicians also realise that the surface melodic approach just will not suffice for Karnatic music?

Gone are days when great practitioners of the art used to stress repeatedly, that one should not sing for the audience but instead elevate the listeners to such a level so as to make them accept the tone and expose them to real music. Today, unfortunately, the scenario is changed. Musicians who do not adjust to these rapid changes or even follow the bidding of certain music enthusiasts

and Sabha officials, are not called to perform. They are condemned for not being able to pool in enough gate money for the Sabhas patronising fine arts.

The calibre of advance level students or for that matter even seasoned musicians were assessed firstly, by their ability to fine tune the Tanpura. Tuning the Tanpura also requires a high degree of Sruti sense. On mastering it enables one to identify subtle Sruti variations and tonal variations. But today we are in the electronic age, and we see music students, beginners and amateurs opting to sing with electronic Tanpuras and drone. This has deprived them from using the oldest drone instrument, the Tanpura. The Tanpura is slowly fading out and the electronic era is setting in fast.

One is sure to miss the Tanpura and the Sruti sense associated with it. However difficult it may be to play or handle the Tanpura, the Nada produced with tonal richness on plucking the Tanpura remains unmatched, which undoubtedly cannot be reproduced by today's electronic drone instruments. This is the primary disadvantage of the electronic and automatic tuning models available today, although portable and advantageous for many reasons. The Tanpura helped musicians realise the semi-tonal and micro-tonal variations which created overall aesthetics.

- Seekari

APPEAL

Four Volumes in the "GARLAND" series titled **A Garland, Another Garland, Yet Another Garland & The Fragrant Garland** are before the music-loving public. Readers of SHANMUKHA would have perused the gracious reviews of the books by the Editor. It is my desire to wind up the 'GARLAND' series of Biographical Dictionary of Carnatic Composers, Musicians with the fifth and the last of the series. I shall be grateful if Vidwans and Vidushis of standing and musicologists help with full bio-data, special comments, anecdotes and achievements and join the non-commercial Yagna. Those whose lives had been included already may peruse the contents in the four books & suggest additions worthy of being passed on to music-loving public & posterity.

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Nritya Geeta Mala

Nritya Geeta Mala - Volume II. By Guru Rajee Narayan. Released on March 10, 2000 by Dr. V. Subramanian, President, Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha at SIES High School Hall, Mumbai.

Guru Smt. Rajee Narayan is a familiar name to the aficionados of fine arts in general and the classical dance fraternity in particular, not only in Mumbai but in other places where Bharata Natyam flourishes.

Recipient of several titles like "Kalavani" "Natya Tilakam", "Natya Nipuni", "Natana Kala Bhushanam", "Shreshta Kala Acharya" (M. P. Govt.), "Lalita Kala Ratna", "Nritya Sudhakara", etc., the most rewarding perhaps is the Rajya Sanskrit Puraskar for Dance conferred by the Govt. of Maharashtra in 1998. Rajee is the only South Indian to receive this Lifetime Achievement Award since its inception two decades ago and it is an acknowledgement of her contribution to the cultural milieu of Mumbai. A little bit about Rajee's background would reveal the aptness of the honour.

Rajee, the last of eleven children was born to Gangammal and Narayana Iyer in Madras. Her training in the twin arts of Bharata Natyam and Karnatic music began when she was four and was nurtured in an environment replete with music, dance and cinema. It was no wonder that she cut her first gramophone disc when she was barely four and a half years old besides acting in two of her father's films.

Rajee had advanced training in music from Thoraiyur Rajagopala Sarma and was groomed by Guru Smt. Lalitha of Saraswati Gana Nilayam, Madras, in the intricacies of Bharata Natyam and Natya Sastra. Incidentally, she was one of the three disciples of Lalitha to be honoured at the diamond jubilee of Saraswati Gana Nilayam, in July 1998, for carrying on the tradition of guru sishya parampara through their own institutions. Rajee had also received training in Kathak, light Hindusthani music, and Western arts like the piano besides dancing the Scottish reel and the Irish jig. She began performing in earnest from the age of nine and has been a graded artiste of the All India Radio for over forty years.

Her career as music and dance teacher began in 1952 in Madurai where she settled after her marriage. A few years after she lost her husband she shifted to Bombay in 1965 and set up her institution Nritya Geethanjali and has since been teaching in Matunga, Chembur, Sion and Colaba. It was not long before she established herself as a dedicated guru who trained her students not only in Bharata

Natyam and Karnatic music but also in make-up, compering, etc. She is a complete guru in the true sense of the word - a strict teacher, she tempers her firmness with gentleness and genuine care for her students, so much so that she is Auntie not only to her disciples but their parents as well.

She was the first guru to start classes for Nattuvangam and Natya Sastra and conducting exams for the same with external examiners. Her expertise in her chosen field and thorough knowledge of the Sastras was acknowledged by her inclusion in the Board of Studies for Dance by the University of Mumbai where she served for more than two decades. She is also the paper-setter and practical examiner for BFA and MFA courses.

Several of her students have set up branches of Nritya Geethanjali not only in several parts of India, but in countries abroad like Canada, USA, Australia and Singapore where they are carrying on the tradition inherited from their guru.

Guru Rajee Narayan's contribution did not stop with merely training her students. Her immense creativity began with formulating and choreographing intricate Jatis that spruced up several compositions and were the cynosure of all dance lovers. Her repertoire is so vast and so varied that she can conduct several recitals in succession without repeating a single item. The multi-lingual nature of the repertoire ensures that her disciples who speak different languages perform to at least one item in their mother tongue. She is one guru who has not fallen into the trap of lovelorn Nayika compositions for her disciples regardless of their age but has given importance to Bhakti bhava. Not that she eschews Sringara - that is reserved for those old enough to understand the nuances and emotive suitably and with dignity.

Rajee gave vent to her creative urge by setting to music several lyrics composed by her and choreographed them for her students. Her compositions are not only in Tamil, her mother tongue, but also in Telugu, Sanskrit, Hindi and Manipravalam.

A compilation of her compositions forming two complete Margams of Bharata Natyam was published in 1985. *Nritya Geeta Mala - Volume I* has 25 compositions



Guru Kalyansundaram receiving the Book

in three scripts, viz, Tamil, Devanagari and English with word to word meaning and summary in English, musical notation and Jatis. It is the first of its kind and a boon to dancers looking for new compositions and its structure enables any dancer from any corner of the world to comprehend, sing, choreograph and dance to any composition with ease. It has been well acclaimed by dancers and critics like T. S. Parthasarathy. She has also published *Natya Sastra Mala*, a compilation of her lectures to her students that succinctly explains Bharata's *Natya Sastra*.

It is a measure of her awesome creative output that she has recently published *Nritya Geeta Mala* - Volume II comprising 31 compositions, that is partly financed by the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi. The book was formally released on Friday, 10th March 2000 by Dr. V. Subramanian, the President of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine

Arts & Sangeetha Sabha and received by Guru Kalyanasundaram of Sri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir. This volume follows the same pattern as the earlier one, but is different in that it includes Varnams and Padams in Hindi, Nayaka Padams exclusively for male dancers, Nindastuti, etc. She has used rare Ragas like Charukesi, Dharmavati, Navarasa Kannada and Hindustani Ragas like Pilu, Behag and Kalavati.

Rajee has the distinction of being the only guru who imparts training in Bharata Natyam, Karnatic music, Natya and Tala Sastras, and Nattuvangam. Far outweighing this is her uniqueness as the only woman Vaggeyakara of our time. Yet it is to her credit that she is humble and self effacing and goes on with the art of teaching. Mumbai and South Indians in particular, are proud of her achievements and wish her a long and healthy life.

- Rasikapriya

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*A Tribute***"Margadarshi" of Manipuri**

By Kinnari

*Guru Bipin Singh*

What was conceived and programmed elaborately, comprising about 70 artists, to felicitate the internationally acclaimed Guru Bipin Singh, for his creative life-time contribution to the art of Manipuri Dance, by stroke of fate, turned out to be a homage, a tribute to the Guru. (He passed away on January 9, this year).

Sana - Leibak (The Golden Land of Manipur) was, as per the organisers, the Banyan Tree and Jhaveri Sisters, "a never before Festival of Dance, Music & Martial Arts" bringing to fore the rich legacy of Manipuri (presented on 20th and 21st January of this year at Rang Bhavan and Shanmukhananda Hall respectively). In fact, it reflected the Guru's genius and versatility in exploring the potentialities of the Manipuri and elevating the same to a great classical art form. It was a mass-scale performance, well-knit, well-choreographed and presented with aesthetic finesse.

The name of Guru Bipin Singh conjures up vision of "the art of subdued eloquence", that is Manipuri. The genius Guru was ever in search of new expressions based on scientific analyses of classical elements inherent in the art, its intrinsic beauty, evolved over the years, so much so he became synonymous with the very artform. His mission, his passion was directed towards establishing Manipuri as a classical form clearing the misconception

that it was a folk art and convincing that it had rich tradition and classical roots.

It all started with his inborn talent and interest in Mridang, the Laya extending to Lasya, the grace that is the epitome of expression of Manipuri. Born on 23 August, 1918, Bipin trained in music and dance left home in Cachar district of Assam on a quest of the true classical idiom of Manipuri. He had intensive training in Manipuri dance from various Gurus and interacted with many residing in Manipur, and the districts of Cachar, Sylhet and Tripura. Among the well-known Gurus he trained under such as Guru Amubi Singh, Guru Amudon Sharma and Guru Atomba Singh, Bipin found a keen aesthetic affinity with style, say Gharana, of Guru Amudon Sharma, and always sought inspiration and guidance from him for his own work.

Guru Bipin Singh's efforts were directed towards exploring and experimenting with the dramatic potentialities of the Manipuri dance. He incorporated its various forms in his dance-dramas which he composed to suit the demands of the theatre. He had a collection of various texts, manuscripts. He also collected many traditional dance music - Padavalis and songs, Tala compositions from oral tradition belonging to Gurus and scholars of Manipur. Over and above he himself composed many songs for dance, Tala etc.

According to a note prepared by one of his versatile disciples Darshana Jhaveri :

Guru Bipin Singh's involvement in continuous research and numerous visits to Manipur made it possible for him to collect many important manuscripts and Vaishnavite texts of dance and music and had enabled him to edit a few of them. He had also correlated oral traditions of Manipuri Dancing with these texts and collected the classical elements of Manipuri Dancing and composed dance and music compositions which enabled him to transplant the traditional art of Manipuri Dancing to the theatre without polluting its pristine purity.

With the cooperation of Jhaveri Sisters, Kalavati and generous financial assistance from Ford Foundation to Manipuri Nartanalaya, Guru Bipin Singh tape-recorded and video filmed all possible dance, music and lyric compositions (traditional as well as his own), microfilmed

all the manuscripts and undertook publications of rhythm patterns (his own and traditional), *Krishna Rasa Sangeet Samgraha* (MSS) songs (traditional as well as his own). He had been guiding many students of Dance and research in the field of Manipuri Dancing who received scholarships from Government of India.

His creative contribution in the field of Manipuri Dance which reveals his scientific attitude and scholastic approach amply deserved to be recognised as his own individual Gharana of Manipuri Dancing. No doubt, he was a rare person - a composer, choreographer - scholar - teacher all rolled into one. Yet very Satvik, true to the 'subdued eloquence' so characteristic of the dance form Manipuri he expounded. He was a perfectionist, hailed his senior most disciple, Nayana Jhaveri.

In her Foreword to the book written on him by Nayana Jhaveri, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya lauded Guru Bipin Singh for "stabilising and popularising Manipuri in the post-independence era". She observed :

His methodological and meticulous temperament did not believe in short cuts but only in excellence. When an ancient art had to be brought into the mainstream of the country, he did it with imagination and maturity without impairing and stultifying the old forms and movements. He was creative and not static and with his great respect for the art, he knew that its greatness and achievement rested on its inner life, not just repetitive movement. His continued research, his ceaseless hunt for perfecting and improving what he inherited, marked him out as an unusual teacher.

He was fortunate to have versatile Sishyas like Jhaveri Sisters, Kalavati and others to enunciate what he explored and experimented and to this day they have been on the mainstream propagating the legacy left by the Guru.

As a mark of respect to the great Guru it would be appropriate to 'let the Guru himself speak of the characteristics of the dance form he cherished and nourished.' Following is the text of paper he presented with demonstration at the First All India Sangeetha Natya Kala Conference organised by Kala Sadan Cultural Society and published in the book "Sangeetha Natya Kala Sangraham".

The dance movements, Abhinaya, Tala, Songs etc., of any dance style should be viewed and enjoyed according to individual characteristics, tradition and tenets of that particular dance style and not in comparison with the other dance styles.

According to Shastras, there are three different ways - *Swanugata*, *Anugata* and *Gamaka* - in which *Angikabhinaya* (movements of different parts of body, Anga, Pratyanga, Upanga) is done. *Swanugata* - the meaning is conveyed only through body movements including hand gestures without the help of the song. *Anugata* - each word of the song is conveyed through body movements including hand gestures. *Gamaka* - the meaning of the song is conveyed through body movements suggestively.

In Manipuri, mainly Abhinaya is done in the *Gamaka* way i.e., facial expression is subtle, subdued though natural and hand gestures suggestive and not realistic. The root of using hand gestures is found in the ancient traditional dance of priestesses "Maibis" in the festival of Laiharaoba. They describe the creation of earth and man. The hand gestures are natural e.g., *Leipomba* - the bud is shown through 'Koraka' (ii) for *Kati* (scissors), *Kartarimukham* is used (iii) for *Yumbi* (Pillar) *Suchimukham* is used.

These, along with the hand gestures mentioned in the Shastras were developed and codified and used in *Rasleelas* in its own stylised and suggestive way.

Sometimes the meaning of the song is also conveyed through movements of the entire body without emphasis on hand gestures e.g., *Gajagamini*, *River Jamuna*, *Kandukkreedha*, *Holikakreedha* etc.

An example of 'Khandita Nayika', to show natural and suggestive facial expressions :

Radha is Uttam Nayika (one of the three kinds - Uttam, Madhyam, Adham). The Vaishnavite scholars have subdivided Khandita into 8 sub-states such as *Ninda*, *Kruddha*, *Bhayanaka*, *Pragalbha*, *Madhya*, *Mugdha*, *Kampita* and *Samtapta* which become elements of the compound emotion of pathos. This is shown in subdued and suggestive way in Manipuri style because this style is developed in the temple having more emphasis on Bhakti (Devotion). Abhinaya is always done with restraint and dignity so that there is not a slightest possibility of creating sensuality in the mind of an onlooker as well as it should not provoke any strong emotion so as to affect the devotional feelings (Bhakti) of the onlooker. This is strongly believed in the tradition of Gaudiya Vaishnav sect of Manipur.

The Vaishnavite Shastras like *Bhaktiratnakar*, *Govindleelamritam* etc., available in Manipur and followed by the Gurus describe the use of hand gestures and other body movements in order to express stories of Radha and Krishna.

The distinguishing trait of Manipuri is an expression entirely through body movements (Nritta) rejecting emphasis on any one part. The movements are rounded continuously mingling into each other. Hence it is very difficult to determine upto what limit one must execute particular movements unless it is done practically under the guidance of Gurus, with natural grace.

However, the movements should be done distinctly i.e., each movement should be over before starting the next.

For example *Upleti* (*Pidhan Bhramari*) after turning round the right hand should be completed at the chest. The bending of the knee (*Pheinamba*) is one of the characteristics of Manipuri but that also should not be done very often. Old Gurus used to do it only at certain places. The hands do not go above the head or below the waist unless it is done in Abhinaya. The knees and feet are kept very near i.e., not more than 1 1/2" apart. The body movements should be done up and down (*Ipom*) like the waves of the sea that also at certain places only and not the spring movement. The torso movement should be done sideways. There should not be any hip movement. The upper part of the body should be natural and not stiff or hunchbacked. The eyes and neck should follow the hand movements. However the chin should remain natural and not upward.

Manipuri has got two distinct divisions of Tandava (the masculine) and Lasya (feminine). Lasya in Manipuri is lyrical and graceful. Some in the name of grace, overdo movements of the hands and body which I feel are influenced by Uday Shankar's soft style. But the old Gurus never did this. Even the present well-known old Gurus of traditional Ras are absolutely different. In fact, they will never be able to do such style. The real grace is in control, restraint of the movements of neck, torso and hands. Otherwise by overdoing movements all movements will tend to look the same and will mar the original Manipuri style and create confusion among the onlookers.

In Tandava (Krishna Tandava) though there is grace, the movements of jumping i.e., one foot lifted horizontally upto the other knee, should be done properly with little force keeping the feet and knees close, so as to distinguish it from its counterpart Lasya.

The movements of two divisions of Tandava

Gunthanam (Krishna Tandava) and *Chalanam* (Cholom Tandava) should be done distinctly having different basic forms i.e., in *Gunthanam* the knees are kept as close to each other as possible and in *Chalanam* the knees are kept apart at a particular distance and bent (*Thongkhong*).

In Lasya there are two divisions :

1. *Simitangam* which has slow movements executed with restraint and is done in traditional *Bhangi Parengs*
2. *Sfuritangam* which has movements on three Layas and is done *Pungloi Jagoi*.

Sometimes feet movements are done before the stress specially in *Natpala* known as *Mathongchatpa* and so some say that the bells were not worn in Ras, but in *Rasleela* rarely such steps occur and even though they come, from old times, bells were worn and were known as *Kongji* with small bronze tinklets. They are not in much use now but instead they use bead ornaments called *Nupoor*.

PRABHANDA

Musical composition (Prabandha) is divided into two: Nibaddha and Anibaddha.

Anibaddha is one which does not have any fixed time measure (Tala). It is like Alapa in music. Such bol compositions are many in Manipuri, such as some composition of Mridanga Raga, Sara and Bhanga. The Mridang Ragas are invocatory bols and are played at the beginning of programmes. The other variety is played at certain places only. Nibaddha music has fixed time measure. Manipuri excels in the use of Innumerable Talas (time measures) and their intricate and complicated rhythm patterns. Manipuri has got Geetaprabandha and Tala Prabandha.

In Tala Prabandha more than one composition of Tala are played together. Here the Laya (speed) varies according to the nature of the Tala as well as composition of the syllables (Bols). It is not compulsory to have one speed (Laya) throughout the composition e.g., Prabandha like 'Sri Sachinandan' has got compositions of 8 different Talas such as (1) Dhytal, (2) Achouba (Tripuraswari) (3) Ganjendra (4) Tevda (5) Panchamsavari (6) Chautal (7) Melmatek and (8) Menkup.

Compositions based entirely on one Tala are not very common in Manipuri. Even if the composition is based on one Tala throughout, the Laya (speed) sometimes varies due to the need of peculiar structure or compositions of syllables and sometimes the same speed is maintained throughout.

There are three types of Talas :

1. Shuddha : Single pure Tala
2. Shalag : Combination of 2 Talas in the main phrase e.g. Age Rambha has Talas like Jaydik and Rupak.
3. Sankirna : More than two Talas in the main phrase e.g., *Julake Jhulake Pyari* has Tal Dashkosh Adachowtal and Rupak.

The reference is found in *Sri Krishnarasangeet Sangraha*.

In Manipur Shalag and Sankirana are known as Pheratala or Phertal. Reference to both is found in the handwritten manuscripts of Gurus.

Sometimes Talas having less matras like 4, 7, 10 have more than one or two Avartans (cycles) in one Theka (main phrase) according to the first line of the song.

Then the Athaba or concluding piece of the composition is completed sometimes on first Tal (Sama graha-tankok) or second Tali (Vardhaman tanyai) or last Tali (Hiyaman-tanmai).

In Manipuri Tala system, 8 Jatis are prevalent like Ekaki Laghu having 1 Aksharkal (one matra in present system), Pakshini (2 Aksharkal), Tryastra-3 Aksharkat 3 matras, Chaturashtra 4 Aksharkal 4 matras, Khanda-5 Aksharkal 5 matras, Ritu-6 Aksharkal 6 matras, Misra-7 Aksharka, 7 matras, Sankirna - 9 Aksharkal 9 matras. These are found in many Mridang Ragas, and Talas in Manipuri. Its reference is in *Govindsangeet Leela Vilas* (Taladhyay shlok 79). In *Mridang Vyavastha* reference of Ektal having 1, 2, 4 matras is given.

In *Geeta Prabandha* when one or more elements of music like Swara (musical notes) Pata (Syllables) Tenaka (auspicious words), Pada (Poem), and Biruda (Invocation of God) is added to Tala it becomes a variety of Geet Prabandha. In Manipuri many such compositions are popular in *Ras* and *Natpala*, e.g.,

1. *Jaya Jana Ranjani* : has got all the 6 elements and is known as Medinijati Shadanga Prabandha.
2. *Swara Mandala* : 5 elements except Biruda known as Nandinijati Prabandha.
3. *Tanum* : 5 elements except Biruda in Tanum element of Tenaka which later on was also used for words like Dim, tom, dere, tana are used)
4. *Naderdani tom* : (It is a part of a song *Tatheia* of Bhangji Pareng) having two elements i.e. Tenaka and tala.
5. *Sa, re, ga, re, sa* : (a part of song of Sukhada Rajani. Song of Bhangji Pareng) having two elements Swara and Tala.

There is a feeling that Manipuri is very slow. It is not so. The dance movements are always composed in accordance with the syllables of the drum. The Syllables are in accordance with Laya which depends upon Ras and Bhava. So all the three Laya (slow, medium and fast) are used e.g., Tal Rajmel in *Natpala* begins with Vilambit very slow speed then; *Melavonbi* is in medium speed (Madhya) in *Melthaba* (concluding portion) the speed becomes very fast (Dhruta).

In *Rasleela Bhangji* Parengs are of slow and medium rhythm but Punglol Jagoi can be of slow, medium and fast tempo.

Manipuri dance style has got all the potentialities required for expressing different sentiments, moods, characters, situations, in a dance drama e.g., for romantic characters or mood mainly style of *Rasleela* and *Goshtha* can be utilised. For various Rasas like valour, anger etc., forceful, stately, acrobatic movements from *Cholom* or *Thang* (sword) and *Ta* (spear) dance can be used.

Manipur has a variety of Talas and rhythm patterns to suit different characters, moods and situations.

Ballets and dance dramas in Manipuri style are being composed utilising these various styles and rhythm patterns.

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Pandit Devendra Murdeshwar

(19th September 1923 - 29th January 2000)

Being born in the Saraswat Brahmin family, the environment at the Murdeshwar home at Masur (in North Kanara district of Mysore State) was more than congenial to musical sensibilities of Devendra. His father was a keen connoisseur of music and also played on the violin, the flute and the Tabla as a joyous hobby. All this made a deep impact on the mind of the impressionable young Devendra. A chip of the old block, school-going Devendra also learned to play on the flute and the Tabla. He showed a flair for singing stage songs and playing the Banjo (Bulbul Tarang) and Harmonica too.

Curiously, however, his interest in music remained relatively dormant till he came to Bombay in 1941. The arrival in the metropolis brought many opportunities to hear the great musical stalwarts of the time like Pt. Omkarnath Thakur, Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan, Ustad Aman Ali Khan, Pt. D. V. Paluskar, Pt. Ratanjankar, Surashree Kesarbai Kerkar, Pt. Ravi Shankar and Ustad Ali Akbar Khan and many others. All these meetings must have ignited the thirst in him to such an extent that even while sustaining himself as a sales representative, he still found time to learn the Tabla from the late percussion maestro Ustad Amir Hussain Khan. Around the same time, he was also receiving guidance in vocal music from Master Navrang. Devendra had a creative mind not merely limited to music alone and soon was learning commercial art. During this period, he also came in contact with another great vocalist Pt. S. C. R. Bhat, a disciple of Pt. S. N. Ratanjankar and together they spent long hours-discussing subtleties of music over Irani tea at a small restaurant in Santacruz - (a suburb of Mumbai). He used to tell me that these long sessions with Pt. S. C. R. Bhat contributed considerably to his profound knowledge of the Raga system.

The great moment in his quest of music came when Murdeshwar chanced to hear the inimitable flute maestro, Pannalal Ghosh, a disciple of Baba Allaaddin Khan of Maihar in 1947 while he was still learning Tabla under Ustad Amir Hussain Khan and was known as an accomplished Tabla player. So abiding was the impact of Panna Babu's music on his mind that he decided to learn the flute under the guidance of the great master. And it was his great Ustad, Tabla Maestro Amir Hussein Khan who put a word to Pannalal Ghosh about Devendraji and that turned the whole career for him. Learning under Pannalal Ghosh, Murdeshwar practised day and night with

exemplary diligence and it was not long before he became a prime disciple and a well-known flautist.

Murdeshwar joined the staff of All India Radio in 1950 as a flutist in the National Orchestra under Pt. Ravi Shankar. It was his quest for the knowledge that brought him very close to Pt. Ravi Shankar and he became his trusted lieutenant. Through this association with Pt. Ravi Shankar he learnt in detail many aspects of different styles in various Gharanas of Classical Music. In his service with A.I.R. at Delhi, he also came in close contact with many maestros in the field of music like Ustad Hafeez Ali Khan, legendary Ustad Baba Allaaddin Khan Sahib, Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan, Ustad Amir Khan, Pt. Behere Buwa, Pt. Ratanjankar, Pt. Mallikarjun Mansoor and others. Devendra's yearning for knowledge would make him discuss intricacies of various new Ragas and their technicalities with these stalwarts. This constant indulgence in theoretical discussions expanded his knowledge repertoire considerably. He became famous not only for his strict adherence to the purity of the Raga and intelligent and aesthetically melodious renditions but also as one of the most knowledgeable musicians among his contemporary.

Unfazed by such wide acceptance and acclaim, Pt. Devendra Murdeshwar continued to refine his prodigious talent with unstinted industriousness and unequalled determination. The result - such mastery of technique and suavity of presentation as belong only to true artistes. Recognition came his way as he participated in all important music conferences in various parts of India, including National Programmes of Music and Akashvani Sangeet Sammelans. He represented the Government of India as a member of official cultural delegations and had occasions to perform before vast audiences in Nepal, Afghanistan, Russia, East Germany, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. He also toured Canada and U. S. for a chain of concerts. He was honoured with Sangeet Natak Academy Award and given 'Gaurav Puraskar' by the Government of Maharashtra.

I had a multi-facted relationship with him. During my tenure of 15 years of studentship with him, I observed him as a GURU, as a maestro, as a brilliant scholar, as a producer of All India Radio, as a friend and also as an outstanding craftsman and a humorist and as a kind, generous and affectionate human.

As a Guru, I found him to be an extremely disciplinary and demanding teacher. His lessons were systematic and he had a knack of simplifying all that was considered complicated, making it easier for the student. If some idea proved to be too difficult, he would give numerous examples to narrate his point. He would explain a given Raga with its peculiarities and also explain the relevant similarity it has to other ragas. He would differentiate this by singing numerous phrases common to various strikingly similar Ragas, then going on to explain how to avoid confusion between them. Or, on occasions he would explain the present form of a Raga and compare it with the orthodox form of presentation of that Raga. Sometimes he would turn a quiz master asking us to state what mistakes one could make in rendering a particular Raga so as to make it sound like a related though different Raga altogether. Unlike the traditional Guru, he indulged us by informally discussing the history and theory of music in general and Ragas in specific, using anecdotes and stories of lore.

As a person he was very affectionate, lively and full of wit. He had an uncanny sense of humour and was a great mimic. His mime was a pleasurable experience and I feel that such a demeanour must have contributed to the expressions in his music. All the more so when there would be an inspired conversation with the Tabla accompanist. As a critic his observations were acute. Even the minutest

detail would not escape his vision. One could find his wit in his musical expressions. He remained very honest to his musical tradition and was never tempted to play for the gallery. He would always advise me "Don't go down to the level of the audience, but bring the audience up to your level."

He was a wonderful master craftsman. In flute making his mastery, artistry and perfection was enviable. Flute making was his passion and he made the finest flutes I have ever seen. I remember accompanying him to a place in Karnataka called Unchihalli Falls near Sirsi, going deep down to the base of the fall and selecting the bamboo. He did not pay heed to our request not to go down even though he was unwell and climbing back was treacherous. Having been trained in the art of portrait painting as a youngster, he always spared some time to make some portraits of friends and acquaintances.

He remained faithful to his opinions, teachings, and principles and never believed in false praise or flattery for the sake of any gain. As an artist, he kept himself out of gimmickry. He faced lots of difficulties in his professional life, but never compromised his principles, receiving succour from his tremendous faith in the family deity and Guru parampara. His friends, relatives, and students and music lovers all over will miss him but his music will always be alive deep in their being. For me this is an irreplaceable personal loss.

- Nityanand Haldipur

Form IV

(See Rule 8 of Press & Registration of Books Act)

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|--|---|--|
| 1. Name of the Publication | : | SHANMUKHA |
| 2. Place of Publication | : | 292, Comrade Harbanslal Marg, Mumbai-400 022. |
| 3. Periodicity of Publication | : | Quarterly |
| 4. Printer's Name & Address | : | Sevak Press
B-1, Shalimar Industrial Estate
Matunga Labour Camp, Mumbai-400 019. |
| 5. Publisher's Name | : | Shri S. Seshadri |
| Nationality | : | Indian |
| Address | : | Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts
& Sangeetha Sabha (Regd.), Mumbai 400 022. |
| 6. Editor's Name | : | Dr. (Smt.) Sulochana Rajendran |
| Nationality | : | Indian |
| Address | : | Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts
& Sangeetha Sabha (Regd.), Mumbai 400 022. |
| 7. Name and address of Individuals who own the Newspaper and Partners or Shareholders holding more than one percent of the Capital | : | Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts
& Sangeetha Sabha (Regd.), Mumbai-400 022. |

I, S. Seshadri, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief

S/d. S. Seshadri
Signature of Publisher

A Report

Focus on the Youth

PADAM, a cultural organization, based at Vile-Parle started by a group of music enthusiasts, celebrated their fifth Annual Programme on 20 Feb 2000. Its main objective has been to identify young upcoming talented artists practising classical music, give them adequate opportunity to progress, to ultimately become performing artists.

The theme this year revolved around the much-hyped new millennium, with the responsibility now being thrust on the shoulders of the younger musicians to preserve our musical culture and heritage in all its pristine purity.

The day's proceedings started on an auspicious note with group rendition of Sri Tyagaraja's Pancharatna Krithis by senior young musicians led by Kiranavali Vidyasankar (sister of Ravikiran, the Chitraveena artist of repute) and Smt. Akhila Seshadri another senior seasoned artist of Mumbai.

Later, 11 senior students presented Krithis of 44 great composers, which included the old and the contemporary, in 44 Ragas. Although many composers known did not figure in the list, the organizers should be lauded on their effort to have conceived and formatted such a programme. Those featured were Ramya Sundaresan, Prasanna Venkatraman, Priyadarshini Narasimhan, V. Ramaswamy, Ramya Narasimhan, N. S. Ramakrishnan, Vaishnavi Rajagopal, Sushmita, Vidya Balasubramanian, Swarnalata Hebbar and the duo Savita Krishnan and Radhika, Vijay Natesan and Rajeev Sundaresan provided Mrudangam support, Violin support was provided by Smt. Kaveri Krishnamurthy and Ranjani Ramakrishnan. Mention must be made of the impressive performances by Prasanna Venkatraman, Priyadarshini Narasimhan, Vaishnavi Rajagopal and the Abhangs Bhajans rendered by the duo, Savita Krishnan and Radhika.

This was followed by an insightful and thought provoking Lec-dem by the eminent musicologist critic of repute, Dr. Sulochana Rajendran. The lecture titled 'Youth and Classical Tradition' blended well with the day's theme. The text of this lecture will appear in a subsequent issue of SHANMUKHA).

PADAM every year has made it a point to honour senior musicians or other eminent personalities of the metropolis, who contribute to the upliftment of this great art. Smt. Seetha Ramakrishnan was this year's choice for the felicitation.

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Recognized for her dedicated efforts in bringing out a number of violin artists in Mumbai, Seetha hails from a musical family. She is the youngest daughter of Shri Parameswara Iyer of Koduvayur, Kerala, her eldest brother being the reputed Natyacharya, Guru Shri Mani of Kalasadan. She had her initial training in violin playing under Shri A. Narayana Iyer, father of the famous violin maestro, Shri T. N. Krishnan. Later she continued her training under Smt. Meenakshi Vishwanathan and had advanced training from Shri Kovai Dakshinamurthy. She has also learnt vocal music from the Kannan Brothers of Coimbatore. After her marriage to Shri R. Ramakrishnan, who also is a great lover of music, Smt. Seetha moved to Mumbai and continued her pursuit of music. She has accompanied many leading musicians and has been an A.I.R. artist for the past 25 years. Presently she devotes all her time in grooming young talented artists and students of music. A teacher par excellence, sincere and dedicated to her profession, she began teaching in the 70's. Her students, including her own daughters, Radhika and Ranjani, are now names to reckon in the music world of Mumbai, having turned out to be able violinists and accompanists.

The felicitation ceremony started with a prayer by the five year old Kum. Urmi, who was introduced to the gathering as a prodigy. This was followed by the Welcome Address by Shri P. R. Krishnamoorthy, the Chairman of Padam. Mr. Jambunathan, the Chief Guest of the evening, another music aficionado, also spoke on the occasion.

Many music sabhas then joined PADAM in honouring Smt. Seetha Ramakrishnan, Kum. Radha, one of her senior students spoke about their great teacher, on behalf of the students. Other well-wishers who knew her personally also spoke, and hailed her as a very nice human, highlighted the ordeals she had to encounter in her life, but nevertheless, continued her efforts to the cause of the Muse.

Before the felicitation ceremony, there was a short but very melodious violin recital by the senior disciples of Smt. Seetha. The grand evening will definitely be remembered, more for the spontaneous gesture of Smt. Seetha Ramakrishnan who offered Rs.500/- to each of the 11 singers, the two violinists and the two mridangists, which moved everyone present into giving her a standing ovation.

Indeed, it was a memorable day, for the music lovers of Mumbai.

-G.S. & V. V.

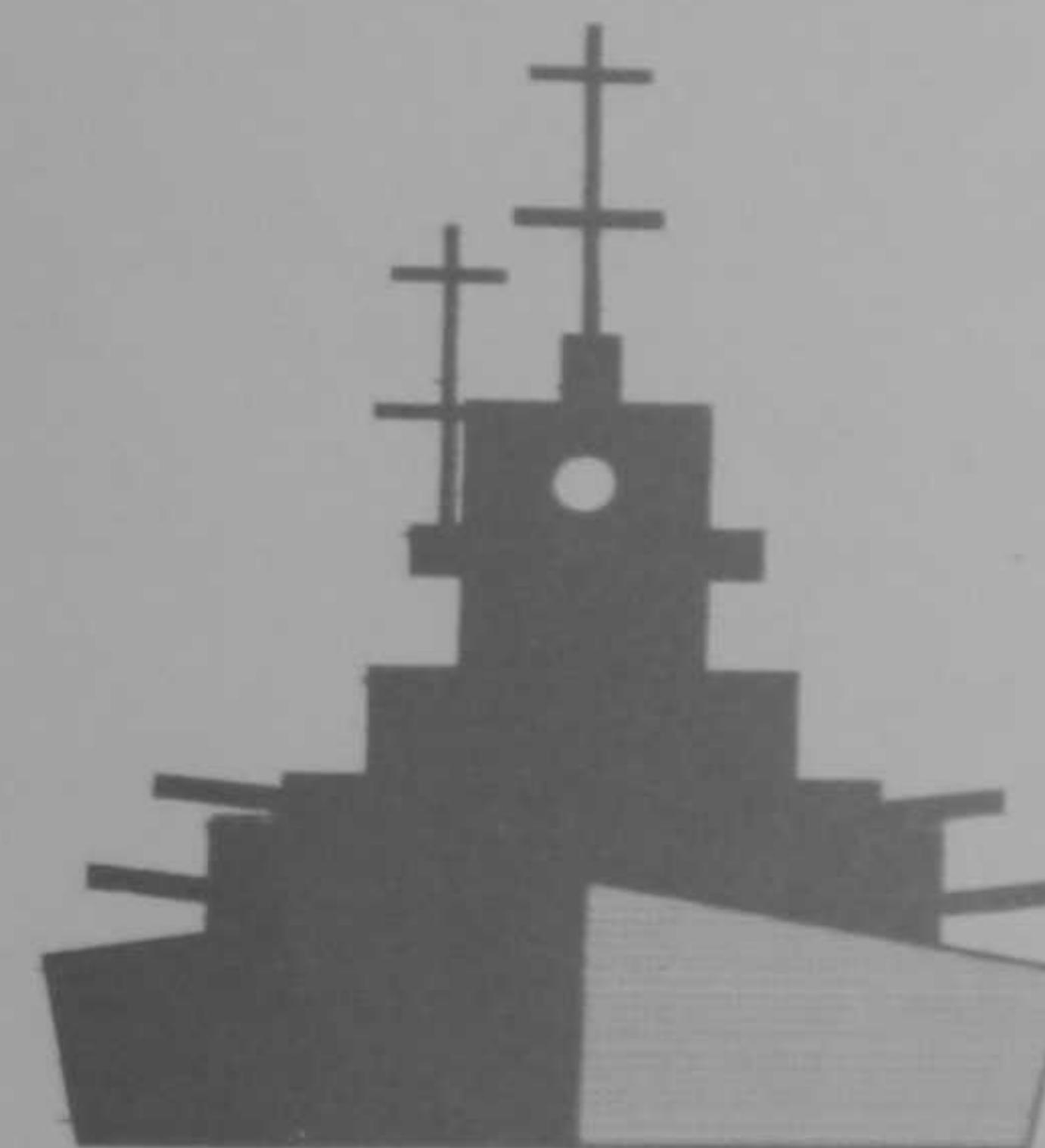
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பதங்களும் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். “தெருவில் வரானோ” (கமாஸ்), “அருமருந்தொரு தனி மருந்து” (மோஹனம்), முதலிய பாடல்கள் இவர் அளித்த விருந்து.

மாசிமுத்தா பின்னை

பதினெட்டாம் நூற்றாண்டின் மணியான பாடல்கள் இவரிடமிருந்து தோன்றின எனலாம். இவருடைய சம காலத்தவராகவும், இவருக்குப் பிற்பட்டவராகவும் பல இசைப் பேரறிஞர்களும், இசை வல்லுநர்களும் தோன்றினர். “பேயாண்டித்தனைக் கண்டு நீயேண்டி மயங்கினாய்”, “ஒரு கால் சிவசிதம்பரம் என்று சொன்னால்” (ஆரபி), “காலைத் தூக்கி பூன்றாடும் தெய்வமே” (ஐதூருல காம்போதி), “ஏதுக்கித்தனை மோடிதான்” (கருட்டி), “என்னோரமும் ஒரு காலைத் தூக்கி” (தேவகாந்தாரி) முதலிய பாடல்கள் இவரை அழராக்கும்.

இவர் அநேக குறவஞ்சி, நொண்டி நாடகம், பதிகங்கள் முதலானவைகளை இசைப்பாடல்களுடனும் இயற்றியுள்ளார்.

இவர் பாடல்களில் ‘தில்லை’யென்ற முத்திரையும், சிவ புராணக் கதைகளும் இடம்பெறும்.

இவருடைய மூத்த மகன் சித்தம் மயங்கி திரிந்து கொண்டிருந்த போது நடராசப் பெருமான் கனவில் உரைத்த படி ‘புலியூர் வெண்பா’ என்ற நூலைப்பாடி தன் மகளின் மனமயக்கத்தைப் போக்கினார்.

அருணாசலக் கவிராயர்

சங்கீத மும்மூர்த்திகளுக்கு முன்னதாகப் பிறந்தவர். தருமபுர ஆட்சைத்தில் தமிழ் மற்றும் பல சமய நூல்களும் கற்றுத் தேர்ச்சி பெற்றார்.

இவர் இராம நாடகக் கீர்த்தனையைப் பாடி திருவரங்கத்தில் அரங்கேற்ற முயன்ற போது பல இடையூறுகள் நேர்ந்தன. இவர் அரங்க நாதரை வேண்ட, அங்கும் இவர் கனவில் தோன்றி ‘நீரும் கம்பரைப் போல் நம் பரிசனங்களைப் பாடும், இராமநாடகக் கீர்த்தனைகள் அரங்கேறும்’ என்று கூறினார். அது போன்றே அர்ச்சகர்கள் கனவிலும் தோன்றி அரங்கேற்றத்திற்கு ஆவன செய்யுமாறு பணித்தார். இராம நாடக கீர்த்தனைகள் அரங்கேறியது.

அருணாசலக் கவிராயரை ஆதரித்தவர்களில் மணலி முத்துகிருஷ்ண முதலியார், துபாஷ் ஆனந்தரங்கம் பிள்ளை, உடையார்பாளையம் உவரங்க்பு உடையார் முதலியோர்.

இவர் இயற்றிய பிற நூல்கள் “அறுமுகி நாடகம்”, “அனுமார் பிள்ளைத்தமிழ்”, “சீர்காழித்தலபுராணம்”, “சீர்க்காழிக் கோவை”.

உஜத்துக்காடு வேங்கட கப்பையர்

“அலைபாயுதே கண்ணா” (காண்டா) “பால் வடியும் முகம் நினைந்து” (நாடகுறிஞ்சி) மற்றும் பல கீர்த்தனைகளை சங்கீத மேடைகளிலும், நடன அரங்கங்களிலும் கேட்கும் போது கிருஷ்ணபக்தியின் சாரம் எல்லோருடைய காதுகளிலும் பாயும். “தாயே யசோதே” (தோடி) என்ற பாடல் உள்ளங்களில் கண்ணனை ஆடச் செய்யும்.

இவர் சிறு வயதில் பூரணூர் நட்சே பாகவதர் என்பவரிடம் பயின்றபின் ஸ்ரீகிருஷ்ணயோகி என்பவரை அடைந்து தன்னைச் சீடனாக ஏற்றுக் கொள்ளும்படி வேண்டினார். அவரோ இவரை மறுத்து உதறித் தள்ளினார். வருத்தத்துடன் திரும்பிய அவரை, அவருடைய அன்னை நர்த்தன கிருஷ்ணையையே குருவாக வரித்து அவனுடைய சரணங்களை அடையும்படிக் கூறினார்.

அப்படியே ஏற்று தியானத்தில் இருக்கும் போது ஒரு நாள் சேறும் சகதியும் உடல் பூராவும் உள்ள குழந்தை இவர் மடியில் வந்து உட்கார்ந்தது. இவர் அதை ஒதுக்கித் தள்ளினார். மறுபடியும் வந்து உட்கார்ந்தது. மறுபடியும் தள்ளினார். இப்படிப் பலமுறை நடந்த பின் வேணுகானம் கேட்டு கண்திறந்தார், கண்ணனின் லீலை அறிந்து மகிழ்ந்தார்.

இவருடைய சாகித்யங்களில் சொல்லமுகும் சொற்கட்டும் ஐதிபோடும். இவர் ஸ்ரீமுத்து ஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதர் போல் “நவா வர்ணக் கீர்த்தனைகளும்” இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். தியாகய்யரின் பஞ்சரத்னங்களையும்

போல் “ஸப்த ரத்னங்களும்” இயற்றியுள்ளார்.

தமிழ்ப்பண்ணான புற நீர்மையில் (செஞ்சுருட்டி) ஒரு தில்லானா இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். இவர் ஒரு நைஷ்டிகப் பிரம்மச்சாரி.

தஞ்சை நால்வர்

சின்னையா, பொன்னையா, சிவானந்தம், வடிவேலு சகோதரர்கள் தமிழ் நாட்டில் இசையும், நாட்டிய இசையும், நாட்டியமும் வளரக் காரணமாக இருந்த கலைஞர்கள், மகா ராஜா ஸ்வாதித் திருநாள் கிருதிகளுக்கு உயிரும் உணர்வும் கொடுத்த பெருமக்கள். இன்றைய கலை உலகில் பெரும் பெயர் பெற்ற நடன இசைக்கலைஞர்கள் இவர்களின் வழித்தோன்றல்களே. தென்னாடு முழுவதும் தமிழிசை மணம் பரப்பியவர்கள். இசை, நாட்டிய நிகழ்ச்சிகளில், ஒரு தெளிவான அமைப்பை வகுத்துக் கொடுத்தவர்கள். நாட்டிய நிகழ்ச்சிகளுக்காகவே பல பாடல்கள், பதங்கள், ஸ்வர ஐதிகள், வர்ணங்கள், ஐதிஸ்வரங்கள் முதலியவற்றை இயற்றியிருக்கிறார்கள். தஞ்சை நாயக மன்னர்களின் ஆதரவில் இவர்களின் இசைமணம் நாடெங்கும் பரவியது.

பாபவிநாச முதலியார்

இவர் 18ம் நூற்றாண்டின் முற்பகுதியில் வாழ்ந்தவர். இவருடைய பாடல்களில் நிந்தாஸ்துதி நிழலாடும். “நடமாடித் திரிந்த உமக்கு இடது கால் முடமானதேன்” (காம்போதி) என்ற பாடல் மிகவும் பிரசித்தம். தாளச்சொற்கட்டுகளும், பாடலமைப்புகளும் இவரின் இசைப்புலமையை வெளிப்படுத்தும். இவர் பாடல்களில், ‘பாபவிநாச’ என்ற முத்திரை இடம் பெறும்.

கனம் கிருஷ்ணய்யர்

தமிழிசை வளர்த்தவர்களில் இவர் தனியிடம் பெறுகிறார். சங்கீத மார்கங்களாகிற ‘கனம்’, ‘நயம்’, ‘தேசிகம்’ என்னும் மூவகை மார்கங்களுள் இவர் ‘கனம்’ பாடுவதில் வல்லவர்.

பொப்பிலி கேசவையா என்ற ‘கனம்’ பாடுவதில் வல்ல கலைஞர், தஞ்சை அரசவைக்கு வந்து தன் திறமையைக் காட்டியபோது தஞ்சை அரசர் தன்னுடைய சபையிலும் அம்மாதிரியான திறமை கொண்டவர் இருக்கவேண்டும் என பிரியப்பட்டார். அதற்கு எந்த வித்வான் முன்வருகிறார் என்று தன் சபையில் இருந்த இசைக் கலைஞர்களைக் கேட்டார். கிருஷ்ணய்யர் ஒருவர் மட்டுமே முன்வந்ததுடன் பொப்பிலி கேசவையாவே வியக்குமளவிற்குத் தேர்ச்சி பெற்றார். கிருஷ்ணய்யர் அதுமுதல் கனம் கிருஷ்ணய்யரானார்.

“நித்திரையில் சொப்பனத்தில்” (பந்துவராளி), “வேலவரே உம்மைத்தேடி” (பைரவி) என்ற பதங்களும், “பாரெங்கும் பார்த்தாலும்” (கல்யாணி) என்ற திருக்குடந்தை சாரங்கபாணி பெருமான் மீது இயற்றியுள்ள பாடல்களும் மிகப்பிரசித்தம்.

உடையார்பாளையம் ஜமீந்தார் இவரை ஆதரித்து வந்ததால் ‘முத்துக்குமார்’ என்ற முத்திரையை வைத்துப் பாடல்கள் இயற்றியதாகத் தெரிகிறது. இவர் மகான் தியாகராஜரைக் கண்டு அவருடைய அருளும் பெற்றதாகத் தெரிகிறது.

ஆனை ஐயா

ஆனை ஐயா - ஐயாவையா என்ற இரண்டு சகோதரர்கள். இவர்கள் மகா வைத்யநாத ஐயரவர்களின் உறவினர்கள் என்றும் கூறுவர். இவர்கள் பிறந்த ஊரான வையச்சேரியின் இறைவனான அகஸ்தீஸ்வரனும், மங்களாய்பிகையும் இவர்கள் பாடல்களில் இடம் பெறுவதோடு, ‘உமாதாஸ்’ என்ற முத்திரையும் இருக்கும். இவர்கள் இணைந்துப் பாடல்களைப் புனைந்தார்களா அல்லது தனித்தனியே இயற்றினார்களா என்பது சரிவரத் தெரியவில்லை. இவருடைய தமிழ்ப்பாடல்கள் சில அபிநயத்திற்கு ஏற்றதாகக் கருதப்பட்டவை.

கோபால கிருஷ்ண பாரதியார்

நரிமணம் என்ற கிராமம் தற்காலத்தில் ‘எண்ணை மண மாக’ நின்றாலும் முற்காலத்தில் இசைமணம் நிறைந்ததாக இருந்தது. இவர்

கனம் கிருஷ்ணய்யரிடம் இசை பயின்றிருக்கிறார். இவர் இராமதாஸ் என்பவரிடம் ஹிந்துஸ்தானி இசையும் பயின்றவர். ஆனைதாண்டவபுரம் அண்ணு ஐயர் இவரை ஆதரித்ததோடு ‘பாரதி’ என்ற பெயரையும் சூட்டியதாகவும் கூறப்படுகிறது.

மகான் தியாகய்யரும், கோபாலகிருஷ்ண பாரதியாரும் சந்தித்த பொழுது உருவானது ஆபோகி ராகப்பாடல்களான முறையே ‘மனஸு நில்ப சக்தி’, ‘சபாபதிக்கு வேறு தெய்வம்’ என்பவை.

இவரும் தியாகய்யரைப் போன்று பஞ்ச ரத்தினக் கீர்த்தனைகள் இயற்றியுள்ளார்.

இராமலிங்க ஸ்வாமிகள், தமிழ் வித்வான் மீனாட்சி சுந்தரம் பிள்ளையவர்கள், மாயூரம் வேதநாயகம் பிள்ளை முதலியோர் இவரைப் பாராட்டியிருக்கின்றனர். ஸ்ரீராமஸ்வாமி சிவனும் அவருடைய சகோதரர் ஸ்ரீமகாவைத்யநாத சிவனும் இவருடைய கீர்த்தனைகளை ஆர்வமுடன் கேட்டனர். தமிழ்த் தாத்தா, டாக்டர் உவே. சாமிநாதய்யர் இவரது மாணாக்கர்.

“நந்தனார் சரித்திரக் கீர்த்தனம்”, “திருநீல கண்ட நாயனார் சரித்திரம்”, “காரைக்காலம்மையார் சரித்திரம்” மற்றும் பல லாவணி, கும்மி முதலியவைகளும் இயற்றியுள்ளார். இவர் பிரம்மச்சாரியாகவே வாழ்ந்தார்.

சியாமா சாஸ்திரிகள், முத்துஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதர்

இவர்களும் சில தமிழ் கீர்த்தனைகள் செய்திருப்பதாகக் கூறுகின்றனர். எந்நேரமும் என்ற தமிழ்பாடல் சியாமா சாஸ்திரிகள் இயற்றியதாகக் கூறுகின்றனர். கௌளிபந்து ராகத்தில் “தருணமிதம்மா” என்ற பாடலை இப்போது மேடைகளில் கேட்கலாம். முத்து ஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதர் மணிப்ரவாளத்தில் “முத்தும் பலமு”மென தமிழ் வடமொழி இணைந்த பாடல் புனைந்திருக்கிறார்.

மாயூரம் வேதநாயகம் பிள்ளை

இவர் பிறப்பால் தீவிர கத்தோலிக்க கிறிஸ்தவர். ஆனால் தன் உள்ளத்தால், உடலால், ஸர்வ சமய போதகர். திருவாவடுதுறை மகா சந்நிதானம் இவரிடம் பேரன்பு கொண்டிருந்தார். தமிழிலக்கியம் இவரை நாவல்களின் தந்தையென்று அழைக்கிறது. “பிரதாப முதலியார் சரித்திரம்” படிக்காதவர் எவர்! இவர் முதலில் ஏடுகள் கோப்பாளராகப் பணிபுரிந்தார். அந்த வேலை சில பொறாமைக்காரர்களின் சூழ்ச்சியால் போயிற்று. இவர் (முன்சிப்) சட்டம் படித்துத் தேர்ந்தார். இவருக்கு மாயூரம் முனிசிப்பாக வேலை கிடைத்தது. நியாயம், நேர்மை, நீதி முதலியவற்றினின்று சற்றும் விலகாமல் பாரபட்சமற்ற தீர்ப்புகள் வழங்கினார்.

சர்வ சமய கீர்த்தனைகள், திருவருள்மாலை, திருவருள் அந்தாதி முதலியவை இவருடைய புகழ் பரப்பும். “கருணாலய நிதியே” (ஹிந்தோளம்), “எவ்வகையிலும் நானே நல் வழிதனைப் பற்றி” (காம்போதி) உள்ளத்தைத் தொடும்.

நீலகண்ட சிவன்

இவருடைய இயற்பெயர் கப்ரமணியன். துறவி. திருவனந்தபுரத்தில் பத்மநாப சுவாமியின் அருள் பெற்று மடை திறந்தாற்போல் பாடல்களைப் புனையத் தொடங்கினார். அது முதல் இவர் பெயர் ‘நீலகண்ட சிவன்’ என ஆயிற்று. “ஆனந்த நடமாடுவார் தில்லை” (பூர்வகல்யாணி), “நவசித்தி பெற்றாலும்” (காஹரப்ரியா), “என்றைக்கு சிவகிருபை” (முகாரி), “இகபாம்தரும் பெருமை” (கமாஸ்) முதலியவை இவருடைய சிறந்த பாடல்களில் சில.

அச்சுத தாஸர்

சிறந்த இராம பக்தர். இவர் தாய்மொழி தெலுங்கு. ஆனாலும் தமிழில் அநேகப் பாடல்கள் புனைந்திருக்கிறார். “காணக் கிடைக்காத தங்கம்”, (செஞ்சுருட்டி), “பார்த்துக் கொண்டிருக் கிறான்” (கமாஸ்) முதலியவைகள் இவர் இயற்றிய உருப்படிகள். ‘துருவ சரித்திரம்’, ‘பிஹுலாத சரித்திரம்’, ‘சக்குபாய் சரித்திரம்’, ‘அத்வைதக் கீர்த்தனைகள்’ என்று பல நூல்கள் இயற்றியிருக் கிறார்.

ராமஸ்வாமி சிவன், மஹா வைத்யநாத சிவன்

இவர்களிருவரும் சகோதரர்கள். மும்மூர்த்திகளுக்கு சூட்டப்டவர்கள். ராமஸ்வாமி சிவன் கந்த புராணக் கீர்த்தனைகள், பிரபந்தங்கள் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். இவரின் கீர்த்தனைகளில் தமிழின் சொற்சிறப்பும், இசையின் வடிவ எழிலும் ஒருங்குசேர ரஸிகர்களைப் பிரமிக்க வைக்கும்.

ராமஸ்வாமி சிவன் ‘குஹதாஸ்’ என்ற முத்திரையை வைத்திருக்கிறார். மஹா வைத்யநாத சிவனே 72 மேளகர்த்த ராகமாலிகையைச் செய்திருக்கிறார்.

கவி குஞ்சர பாரதியார்

சங்கீத மும்மூர்த்திகளின் சம காலத்தவர். நாட்டிய நாடகமான ‘அழகர் குறவஞ்சியை’ இயற்றியவர். பக்தியின் பக்குவச் செறிவையும், இலக்கியச் சிறப்பையும் காட்டுபவை இவர் பாடல்கள். இவருடைய கந்தபுராணக் கீர்த்தனைகளும், பேரீன்பக் கீர்த்தனைகளும் இவருடைய இசைப் புலமையை வெளிப்படுத்து கின்றன. “இவன் யாரோ அறியேன்” (காம்போதி) புகழ்பெற்ற பாடல்.

மழவை சிதம்பர பாரதியார்

தமிழுக்கும் இசைக்கும் பெருமை தரும் குலத்தைச் சேர்ந்தவர். இவருடைய பெரியபுராணக் கீர்த்தனைகள் சக்தி வாய்ந்தவை அநேக தெய்வங்கள் மீதும், தேவதைகள் மீதும், பாடல்களும், கும்மி போன்ற ஆடல் இசைகளும் செய்திருக்கிறார். இவர் ஹிந்துஸ்தானி, மராத்திய இசை முறைகளை அறிந்தவர். இவருடைய படைப்புகள் ராகபாவத்தை தெளிவுபடுத்தும். பேகடையில் இவர் அருளித் தந்த “கருணை தந்தென்னை ஆளம்மா” ஒன்றே போதும்.

துரைஸாமி கவிராயர்

“இன்னும் பாராமுகம் ஏனோ” (பேகடா) என்ற பிரசித்தி பெற்ற பாடலை இயற்றியவர் துரைஸாமி கவிராயர். “அருள் கொடுப்பான், பொருள் கொடுப்பான்” (கருட்டி) இவரது இசைத் திறனுக்கு எடுத்துக்காட்டு. மூனி முருகனிடம் ஆழ்ந்த பக்தியுடையவர். ஆகவே இவரின் பாடல்களின் நாயகன் முருக கடவுளே.

அண்ணாமலை ரெட்டியார்

காவடிச்சிந்து என்ற தனி நடையை பிரபலப்படுத்தியவர் அண்ணாமலைரெட்டியார். நாட்டுப்பாடல் முறையை பிரதி பஸிக்கும் இந்தப் பாக்களில் ஒசைநயம் மனதை நெகிழ வைக்கும். இசை, தாளக்கட்டு, முதலியவை மெய்சிலிக்க வைக்கும். ஆண்டவன் முருகனுக்கு காவடி எடுக்கும் போது பாடும் பாடல்களாகும். பக்தியும், தத்துவமும் ஒன்றோடொன்று பின்னிக் கொண்டு நிற்பது பிரமிப்பூட்டும்.

இராமலிங்க அடிகளார்

பத்தொன்பதாம் நூற்றாண்டின் பெரும்புலவர். இவரின் துறவு வாழ்க்கை சிறு வயதிலேயே துவங்கியது. பற்றற்ற இல்வாழ்க்கை இவருடையது. இவர் ஆறு திருமுறைகளில் பாடல்கள் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். இறைவனை அருட் பெருஞ் சோதியாக்கக்கண்டவர். உணர்வினை கத்த சமரச சன்மார்க்கமாக கொண்டவர். செய்கையினால் ஜீவகாருண்ய உயிர்க் கொள்கையில் உயர்ந்தவர். பதிகம், மாலை, உலா, கண்ணிக் என பலவகைப் பாக்களை பாடியுள்ளார்.

கப்பராம அய்யர்

வைத்தீஸ்வரன் கோவில் கப்பராம அய்யரை அறியாதவர் யார் ? இவர் இயற்றிய “எத்தனை சொன்னாலும்” (சாவேரி), “பதவி வருகுது உருகுது” (காம்போதி), “தத்தை மொழியான்” (கல்யாணி) முதலிய பதங்கள் நாட்டிய பிரசித்தி பெற்றவை. இவர் ஒரு தமிழறிஞர். சிறந்த இசைக்கலைஞர். உயர்ந்த பாடலாசிரியர். இவரின் ஸ்வரஸாஸுரீத்ய அமைப்புகள் கேட்பவரின் மனதில் கிளர்ச்சியை ஏற்படுத்தும்.

லக்ஷமணப் பிள்ளை

இசைக்குப் பெருமை சேர்த்த பேரறிஞர். தமிழ் மொழியின்

அழகையும், வடமொழி வளமையும் பத்தியுடன் கூடிய தத்துவ விராரணகளையும் இவரின் பாடல்களில் காணலாம். “நின்நாமம் உச்சரித்துல்” (ஸ்ரீமான்), “அன்பின் வடிவமே கீதம்” (கேதாரம்) முதலியவை இவருடைய திறமையை விளக்கும்.

கோடல்வர அய்யர்

கவி குஞ்சு பாதிபின் பெண்வழிப்போர். இராமநாதபுரம் பூச்சி ஸ்ரீனிவாஸ அய்யங்காரின் சீடர். இவருடைய “சுந்த க்ளனாம்ருதம்” பாடல்கள் எல்லோர் செவியிலும் அமுதமாகப் பெறியும். இவரும் 72 மேளகர்த்தா ராகங்களில் ராகமாலிகையும், பாடல்களில் ராகமுத்திரையையும் வைத்திருக்கிறார்.

கப்ரம தீக்ஷிதர்

சங்கீத மும்மூர்த்திகளில் ஒருவரான ஸ்ரீமுத்துஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதரின் சகோதரரான பாலு ஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதரின் பெண் வழிப்போனும், ஸ்வீகாரப் புதல்வரும் ஆவார். ‘ஸங்கீத ஸம்பரதாய ப்ரதர்சனி’ என்ற நூலை இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். இவர் நாட்டியத்திற்கு பயன்படக் கூடிய சௌக வர்ணங்களும், பல பாடல்களும் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். இவருடைய கீர்த்தனங்களில் உள்ள யதிப்ராஸங்கள், பத ப்ரமோகங்கள், ராக பாவங்கள், ஸ்வர ஸஞ்சாரங்கள் பரம்பரைப் பெருமையைப் புலப்படுத்தும்.

திருவையாறு பஞ்சநாத ஐயர்

“ஆரமிமானம் வைத்தாதரிப்பாய் யென்னை!” என்ற ரகமாலிகையில் இவரின் சிறப்பு பரிமாிக்கும். இவருடைய இசை ஞானமும், மொழி வளமையும் இவர் பாடல்களில் பிரதிபலிக்கும்.

பட்டினம் ஸு்ரமண்ய அய்யரின் சிஷ்ய பரம்பரையில், பூச்சி ஸ்ரீனிவாஸ அய்யங்கார், மைசூர் வாஸுதேவ சாரியார், டைகர் வாதாசாரியார் போன்ற பெரும் இசைக்கலை வல்லுனர்கள் இடம் பெறுகின்றனர். இவர்கள் அநேக பதங்கள் தில்லானாக்கள், வர்ணங்கள் இயற்றியிருக்கின்றனர். “அன்னமே” (ஆரமி வர்ணம்) டைகரினால் இயற்றப்பட்டது. கருணைக் கடலே (கல்யாணியும்) அவருடையதே. இவர்களுடைய இசை சேவை புகழ் எனும் பெருமைக்கும் மேற்பட்டது.

மகாகவி கப்ரமணிய பாரதியார்

பத்தொன்பதாம் நூற்றாண்டையும் 20-ம் நூற்றாண்டையும் இணைத்து, மொழி, தேசப்பற்று, நாட்டுப்பற்று, இறைப்பற்று, இசைக்கலை, கவிதை நயம், முதலிய எல்லா வகைகளிலும் பெருமை சேர்த்தவர். மக்கள் நலம், தேசபக்தி, இவைகளே இவருடைய கவிதைகளின், பாடல்களின் நாடி. இவருடைய வடமொழி, தென்மொழிப் புலமை இவர் கவிதைகளில் சுடர்விடும். இவருடைய கவிதைகள் இசை நாட்டிய, நாடக துணுக்குகளுடன் முத்தமிழ் முழக்கும்.

தேசிக விநாயகம் பிள்ளை

தமிழ்க் கவிதைகளில் குழந்தைகளுக்கு அருமையான பாடல்களை வகுத்துக் கொடுத்தவர். தேசியப் போராட்டத்திலும் தேச சேவையிலும் முன்னணியில் நின்றவர். “மலரும் மாலையும்” என்ற இவரது தொகுப்பு இசை, கவிதை என்பவற்றிற்கு ஒரு எடுத்துக்காட்டு.

நாமக்கல் ராமலிங்கம் பிள்ளை

“கத்தியின்றி ரத்தமின்றி யுத்தமொன்று வருகுது” என்று அழகாக அலறிம்லை போராட்டத்தை வளர்த்தவர். சிறந்த கவிஞர், தேச பக்தர். இவருடைய கவிதைகள் இசை வடிவில் சிறப்பிடம் பெற்றுள்ளன. சங்கரதாஸ் ஸ்வாமிகள்

நாடகக் கலையின் தந்தை. மேடையில் நடிப்பதற்காகப் பல நாடகங்கள் எழுதி அதில் இசை அமைத்து பல பாடல்கள் எழுதியிருக்கிறார். எதுகை, மோனைகளுடன் இசை மரபு, மேடை மரபு வழுவாமல் அழகான பாடல்களை மேடை நாடகங்களுக்காக எழுதியுள்ளார்.

மதுரை மாரியப்ப கவாமிகள்

சங்கரதாஸ் ஸ்வாமிகளின் சீடர். இவருக்கு பேசும், பாடும் திறன் முருகனருளால் கிடைத்ததாகச் சொல்லுகிறார்கள். இவரும் பல பாடல்கள்

முருகன் மீது இயற்றியுள்ளார்.

சரவணபவானந்தா

தமிழிசைக்குப் பெருமை சேர்க்க இவரது சாகித்யங்கள் உதவி செய்தன எனலாம். மிக அருமையான பல தமிழ்ப்பாடல்கள் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார்.

ஹரிகேசநல்லூர் முத்தையா பாகவதர்

இருபதாம் நூற்றாண்டின் முதல்பாதிக்கு மேல் வாழ்ந்தவர். இவரும் பட்டினம் கப்ரமண்ய அய்யரின் சீடரெனக் கூறலாம். இவர் விஜயநாகரி, கௌட மல்லார், வலஜி போன்ற இராகங்களில் பாடல்கள் புனைந்ததுடன் புதுப் புது ராகங்களையும் உருவாக்கியிருக்கிறார். திருவாங்கூர், மைசூர் ஸமஸ்தானங்களில் ஆஸ்தான வித்வானாக இருந்ததுடன் மகாராஜா ஸ்வாதி திருநாள் கிர்த்தனங்களைத் தொகுத்து அளித்திருக்கிறார். 1933-ஆம் ஆண்டு நடந்த தமிழ் அன்பர்கள் மகாநாட்டில், தமிழ்க் கிர்த்தனைகளைப் பாடி வியப்பூட்டினார். “ஆண்டவன் தெரிசனமே” “ஆனந்தமான ஸங்கீதம்” முதலியவை ஒரு சில. தன்னுடைய வாழ்க்கையை கலா சேஷத்ராவிலும் கழித்தார். சென்னை இசைக்கல்லூரி, மியூஸிக் அகாடமி முதலிய நிறுவனங்களில் இவரது தொண்டின் வண்ணமும் காணப்பெறும். ‘ஹரிகேச’ என்ற முத்திரை பாடல்களில் வரும்.

மாயூரம் விசுவநாத சாஸ்திரி

முதன்முறையாக தெய்வத்திரு மறையாம் திருக்குறளுக்கு இசையமைத்துப் பாடல்களைப் பாடியவர். இவர் முருகனிடம் ஆழ்ந்த பக்தியும், தேசபக்தியும் ஒருங்கே கண்டவர். பாரதம் சுதந்திரமடைந்தபோது “ஜயதி-ஜயதி பாரத மாத” என்ற கீதம் நாலாதிசையிலும் ஒலித்தது. பாடல்கள் புனைவதில் இவர் எல்லா வகைகளையும் கையாண்டு இருக்கிறார். ஒடப் பாட்டுகள், நோட்டுகள், சுதந்திர கீதங்கள் என்று பல வகைப் பாடல்களை புனைந்திருக்கிறார். ஹரிப்பிரியா, லலிதமனோஹரி, ஸரஸானனா, ஸ்வராஞ்சனி, ஸிந்துகௌரி, போன்ற சில ராகங்களை கையாண்டிருக்கிறார்.

“பாலா பஞ்சரத்னம்” என்று குழந்தைகளுக்காக மாதா, பிதா, குரு, சூரியன், சந்திரன் பேரில் ஒரு பாடல் புனைந்திருக்கிறார்.

“சிவனுக்கிளைய சேயே” (ஹேமவதி), “மயில்வாஹனா” (அம்ருதவர்ஷணி), “ஸமரசபாவன” (பீம்பள்ளாஸ்) இவருடைய பிரசித்தி பெற்ற பாடல்கள்.

தஞ்சாவூர் சங்கரய்யார்

அண்மையில் ராகத்தையும், ராக பாவத்தையும் பாடலில் அமைத்து கேட்பதற்கு அழகாக உள்ள கிர்த்தனைகளை இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். இவரின் “ரஞ்ஜனி ராகமாலிகை”யே போதும் உதாரணம் கூற. முதல் நிலை பாடகர்களும் தற்காலத்தில் பாடி வருகின்றனர்.

சுத்தானந்த பாரதியார்

இவருடைய பாடல்களில் தேசிய உணர்வுகள் துள்ளும், பக்தி பரவசமளிக்கும், தத்துவம் சுடர் விடும், தெளிவான சிந்தனையையும் வளர்க்கும். “சத்தியம் வெல்லும் தருமம் தழைக்கும்.” “இல்லையென்பான் யாரடா ?” (மோஹனம்), “கண்ணெடுத்தாகிலும் காணீரோ” (ஸிம்மேந்திரமத்யமம்), “எப்படிப் பாடினரோ” (கர்நாடக தேவகார்த்தாரி) “ஆனந்த நடன மாடினான்” (காம்போதி) இவரின் பிரபல பாடல்கள்.

பாபநாசம் சிவன்

போலகம் ராமையா என்ற பாபநாசம் சிவன் தமிழில் கிர்த்தனைகள் செய்தவர்களுள் மிகவும் பிரபலமானவர். இவரின் பல பாடல்கள் திரைப்படங்களில் இடம் பெற்றிருப்பதுடன், இவரும் சில படங்களில் நடித்துள்ளார். இவருடைய பாடல்களில் சொல்லழகும், இசை வடிவமும், பொருளழகும் - தாளக்கட்டுடன் மிகச் சிறப்புடன் அமைந்திருக்கும். “காணக் கண் கோடி வேண்டும்” (காம்போதி), “காபாலி” (மோகனம்), “மா ரமணன்” (ஹிந்தோஸம்), “கார்த்திகேய காங்கேய” (தோடி), “பராதபா”

(வாசஸ்பதி), “நானொரு விளையாட்டு பொம்மையா” (நவரஸகன்னடா) முதலியவை முன்னணி வித்வான்களால் பாடப்பெற்று வருகின்றன.

நேருர் ஸ்ரீனிவாஸாச்சாரியார்

தன்னுடைய பெயர் முத்திரையுடன் பல கிர்த்தனைகள் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். ராக வடிவமும், இசைமரபும் இவரின் பாடல்களில் நன்றாக அமைந்திருக்கும்.

ச.து. கப்ரமண்ய யோகி

பாரதியாரைக் கவிதைப் போட்டியில் பின் தள்ளி முன் நின்றவர். பல பாடல்கள் இயற்றியதுடன், பல திரைப் படங்களுக்கு பாடலாசிரியராகவும் இயக்குனராகவும் இருந்திருக்கிறார்.

ஸ்வர்ண வெங்கடேச தீக்ஷிதர்

தில்லை நடராஜனின் திருவருளை தன்னிடைக் கொண்டு எல்லையற்ற பக்திப் பெருக்கை வளர்க்கும் கிர்த்தனங்களை இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். இயற்றிக் கொண்டும் இருக்கிறார். நாட்டியத்திற்கான சில பாடல்களும் இயற்றியிருப்பதுடன் முன்னணி நாட்டியக் கலைஞர்களோடு கலந்து சில சாதனைகளும் செய்திருக்கிறார். இசை மேடைகளில் இவர் பாடல்கள் ஒலிக்கக் கேட்கலாம்.

பெரியசாமித் தூரன்

தமிழில் சிறந்த கவிஞர். சிறந்த புலமையுடன் இசைப் பாடல்களை இயற்ற வல்லவர். இவருடைய பாடல்கள் சில நாட்டியக் கலைஞர்களால் மிக எழிலுடன் அபிநயிக்கப்பட்டு வருகிறது. “ஸாமகான்பரியே” (ஆனந்தபைரவி), “என்னென்ன விளையாடல் அம்மா” (ராகமாலிகை), “கலியுகவரதன் கண்கண்ட தெய்வமாய்” (பிருந்தாவன சாரங்கா) முதலானவை பிரபலமான பாடல்கள்.

சுத்த சத்வானந்தா

முன்னாட்களில் என்.எஸ். சிதம்பரம் என்ற பெயரில் இவர் இயற்றிய பாடல்களை பல இசைக் கலைஞர்கள் மேடையேற்றியுள்ளனர். தற்போது சுத்தசத்வானந்தா என்ற பெயரில் மயிலையில் இருந்து கொண்டு இசைத்தமிழ் தொண்டு புரிந்து வருகிறார்.

கீழ்வேளூர் மீனாட்சிகந்தரம் பிள்ளை

பெரும் இசைக் கலைஞர். தியாகப்ரம்மத்திடம் மிகுந்த பக்தி அவரை இதயத்தில் வைத்துக் கொண்டே தமிழ்ப் பாடல்கள் பல இயற்றியுள்ளார். இவருடைய தமிழ்க் கிர்த்தனைகள் இவருக்குப் புகழைத் தந்துள்ளன.

உடுமலை நாராயண கவி, பட்டுக்கோட்டை கலியாணசுந்தரம்

திரைப்படங்கள் இவர்கள் பெயரை கருத்தாழமும், புரட்சி எண்ணங்களும் கொண்ட இசைப்பாடல்கள் மூலம் மக்களிடையே விழிப்புணர்ச்சி ஏற்படுத்தியுள்ளன.

பாரதிதாசன்

‘பாவேந்தர்’ என்றே பலராலும் போற்றப்பட்டவர். இவருடைய கவிதை நாடகங்கள் மிகவும் பிரசித்தி பெற்றவை. இவர் பாடல்களில் சொல்லழுத்தமும், பொருட்செறிவும், சிந்தனை வளமும் காணப்பெறும். பல பாடல்கள் திரைப்படங்களில் இடம் பெற்றுள்ளன.

திருச்சி தியாகராஜன்

“தாமரை பூத்த தடாகமதில்” என்ற பாடல் எந்நேரமும் முழங்கிக் கொண்டு இவர் பெருமையை வெளிப்படுத்தியது. இதுபோல் இவரால் பல பாடல்கள் இயற்றப் பெற்றுள்ளன.

மதுரை பால்கர விஸ்வநாததாஸ்

அந்நியராட்சியில் “வந்தேமாதரம்” என்று சொன்னாலே அடக்குமுறையும், அடிதடியும் நடமாடும் காலத்தில் தேச பக்தி எழுச்சியுடன் இசை மணக்கத் தமிழ்ப் பாடல்களைப் பாடியவர். இவர் பாடல்கள் இசைத்தட்டுகளில் பல வித்வான்களால் பாடப்பெற்றுள்ளன.

நாடகமணி எம். என். எம். பாவலர் மு. அருணாசலம்

நாடக உலகிலும் தமிழ் இலக்கிய உலகிலும் இவர்களுக்கு சிறப்பிடம் உண்டு. இவர்கள் முறையே நாடக, இசைக்கலைக்கும் இலக்கியத்திற்கும் ஆற்றிய தொண்டு எட்டிலடங்காது.

சூலமங்கலம் வைத்தியநாத பாகவதர்

இவர் கதா காலட்சேபம் செய்வதில் வல்லவர். கதா காலட்சேபத்திற்காகப் பல சரிதங்கள் இயற்றியுள்ளார். அவைகளுக்கு ஏற்ற வகையில் பாடல்களும் இயற்றியுள்ளார். இவருடைய இசை நாடகம் டி.கே.எஸ். போன்றவர்களால் மேடையேற்றப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. கோவை கப்ரி என்னும் கப்ரமண்யம்

சிறந்த தேசபக்தரும், தியாகியும் ஆவர். முருகனின் மீதுள்ள பக்தியினால் ‘முருக கானம்’ என்று முருகன் மீது பாடல்கள் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார்.

பொன்னையா பிள்ளை

தஞ்சை நால்வரின் வழித் தோன்றல். பந்தனைநல்லூர் மீனாட்சிகந்தரம் பிள்ளையின் உறவினர். அண்ணாமலை பல்கலைக் கழகத்தில் துவக்கப்பட்ட இசைக் கல்லூரியில் ஆசிரியராக சேர்ந்த குரல்வளம், மிருதங்கப்பகுதி ஆசிரியராகப் பணி ஆற்றினார். தன் முன்னோர்களான தஞ்சை நால்வரின் இசைப் பொக்கிஷத்தை தமிழுலகில் பரவச் செய்ததோடல்லாமல் இவரே பல ஜதி ஸ்வரங்களையும், தார் வர்ணங்களையும் செய்திருக்கிறார். இருபதாம் நூற்றாண்டின் இம் மேதைகளில் இவரும் ஒருவர்.

கல்கி கிருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி

“காற்றினிலே வரும் கீதம்” தொடாத இதயமே இல்லை. “மாலைப் பொழுதினிலே” மயங்காத மனிதனே இல்லை. கல்கி தமிழ் இலக்கிய உலகில் ஒரு துருவ நட்சத்திரம். இவர் தமிழிசைக்காகச் செய்த தொண்டு இவருக்கு இவரே ஈடு. இவருக்கில்லை அவனிமேல் இனி ஜோடி. திரைப்படங்களுக்கு வசனம் பாடல்கள் எழுதியிருக்கிறார். ‘கல்கி வகுத்துக் கொடுத்த வழியில் தமிழ் பத்திரிக்கையின் இலக்கியம் நடைபோடுகிறது. ‘கல்கி’யே ஒரு தனிபுகம்.

கி. ரா. கோபாலன்

இவரும் அநேக பாடல்கள் எழுதி இசைத் தட்டுகளில் வந்திருக்கின்றன. “நித்திரையில் வந்து” ஒரு மனதைக் கவர்ந்த பாடல். கண்ணதாசன்

தமிழிலக்கியம், திரைப்படம் இவைகளின் கவையறிந்தவர் களுக்கு கண்ணதாசன் கற்கண்டு கவிஞனாகவும் – தனி மனிதனாகவும் தத்துவ ஞானியாகவும் - தனித்தனி கோணங்களில் பார்க்க முடிகிறது. பாடல்கள் நீர்வீழ்ச்சிபோல், தெளிவுடன் ருசியுடன், காதிற்கும் கருத்திற்கும் கவையுடன் பெருகி வரும். இவருடைய இறையணர்வுப் பாடல்கள் மனதை ஈர்க்கும். அவர் கடைசியில் இயற்றிய “புல்லாங்குழல் தந்த மூங்கில்களே” என்ற பாடலை பாடாதவர் எவருமில்லை.

எம். எம். தண்டபாணி தேசிகர்

தமிழிசைக்குப் பழுக்கவாச்சியும், புத்துணர்ச்சியும், அழகுவிளிர் புதுமெருகும் கொடுத்தவர். ரத்னாம்பரி, ரதிதிப்பிரா, வந்தனதாரிணி முதலான பல அபூர்வ ராகங்கள் இவர் இசையிலே மக்களை மயக்கியது. கே. என். தண்டாயுதபாணிப் பிள்ளை

நடனத்தில் ஆர்வமும் ஈடுபாடும், ஈர்ப்பும் கொண்டவர்களுக்கு இவரைத் தெரியாமல் இருக்க முடியாது. இவருடைய வர்ணங்கள், தில்லானாக்கள் சிந்தையை மகிழ்விக்கும் வகையில் இருக்கின்றன.

கு. மா. பாலகப்ரமண்யம்

சிறந்த பாடலாசிரியர், நாடகம், திரைப்படம், வானொலி முதலியவற்றில் இவர் பாடல்கள் மிகவும் பிரசித்தம். நாட்டியத் திற்கான வர்ணங்களும், பதங்களும் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார்.

அம்புஜம் கிருஷ்ணா

இசை உலகில் இவருக்கு ஒரு தனிப்பட்ட மரியாதையும் மதிப்பும் உண்டு. பெரிய தொழில் நிறுவனத்தின் உரிமையாளரின் திருமதி என்ற கனியப்பட்ட மதிப்பையும் மீறி - இவருக்கு பெருமதிப்பை சேர்த்தன இவருடைய பாடல்கள். "என்ன தவம் செய்தனை", "சின்னச் சின்ன பாதம் வைத்து" என்ற கவி ராகப் பாடல்கள் "பாணை சோற்றுக்கு ஒரு சோறு பதம்" என்ற வழக்குச் சொல்லிற்கு எடுத்துக்காட்டு.

ராஜம் சீதாராமன்

ஷிப் சாயிப்பாவின் மேலும், தனிப்பாடல்களும் இயற்றியுள்ளார்.

டி. பட்டம்மாள்

கண்ணனை ஆரதிட்டில் இசைக்கவை வளர்த்தவர். "மாதவ கீதம்" என்ற தொகுப்பு ஜெயதேவரின் அஷ்டபதியை நினைவு படுத்தும்.

டாக்டர் பாலமுரளி கிருஷ்ணா

'முரளி' முத்திரையுடன் அநேக பாடல்கள் தமிழிலும் இயற்றியுள்ளார். தஞ்சைப் பெருவுடையார் மேல் இவர் இயற்றிய பாடல்கள் பிரசித்தம். இவர் தில்லானாக்களும் பாடல்களும் இடம் பெறாத நிகழ்ச்சிகளே இல்லை எனலாம்.

கு. சா. கிருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி

தமிழில் அநேக பாடல்கள் இயற்றியுள்ளதான் நாடகங்கள் மிகப் பிரபலமாயின. இவருடைய 'வாசஸ்பதி' வர்ணம் எல்லோ ரையும் கவர்ந்துவிடும்.

மதுரை ஜி.எஸ்.மணி

இசையுலகில் பல புதுமைகள் செய்து வருகிறார். இவர் திரைப்படங்களில் மணம் வீசும் அடிப்படை ராகங்கள் கர்நாடக சங்கீதத்தின் பெருமை என்ற வகையில் இளைய தலைமுறைக்கு இசையில் ஈடுபட வழிகள் வகுத்து வருகிறார். இவரும் அநேக தமிழ்ப் பாடல்கள் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். நாட்டிய நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் இவை இடம்பெறுகின்றன.

எம். டி. இராமநாதன்

தன்னுடைய குருநாதரான டைகரின் மேல் பாடல்கள் இயற்றியுள்ளார். கலாசேத்ரா நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் இவரது இசை வண்ணம் ஒளிவீசும்.

வாகீச கலாநிதி கி.வா. ஜகந்நாதன்

'ஜோதி' என்ற பெயரில் அநேக பாடல்கள் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார்.

உளுந்தூர்பேட்டை ஷண்முகம்

"பார்த்தசாரதி உன் பாதமே துணை" என்று சாமா ராகத்தில் மறைந்த இசை மாமணி சீர்காழி கோவிந்தராஜன் பாடும்போது உருகாத மனமே இல்லை. இவரும் பிரமிக்கத்தக்க சொற் கோர்வைகளுடன் அழகான பாடல்கள் இயற்றியுள்ளார்.

டி.வி.கோபாலகிருஷ்ணன்

லால்குடி ஜெயராமன்

வழுவுர் ராமையா பிள்ளை

போன்ற இசை நடன மேதைகளும் பல வர்ணங்கள், தில்லானாக்கள் இயற்றியுள்ளனர்.

இன்னும் இதுபோல் எத்தனையோ தமிழிசைப் பாடலாசிரியர்கள் இருந்திருக்கின்றனர், இருக்கின்றனர். இருக்கவும் போகின்றனர். திரைப்பட இசைக்கலைஞர்கள் பலர் கவைமிக்க பாடல்களை இயற்றியுள்ளனர் வளமான இசையுலகில்.

பதினெட்டாம் நூற்றாண்டின் துவக்கத்திலிருந்து தமிழி சையின் பொற்காலம். தமிழும் இசையுமென இணைந்து வளர்ந்து கொண்டிருக்கின்றது. இக்காலத்தில் தான் மகாவித்துவான் மீனாட்சி சுந்தரம் பிள்ளை, தியாகராசச் செட்டியார், தமிழ்தாத்தா உ.வே. சாமிநாதய்யர், முதலியோர் பல சைவ சமய ஆதினங்களின் ஆதரவு, னும்,

இசைவுடனும் இசையையும், தமிழையும் வளர்த்தனர்.

மும்மூர்த்திகளான ஸ்ரீதியாகராஜரும், ஸ்ரீமுத்துஸாமி தீக்ஷிதரும், ஸ்ரீசாமா சாஸ்திரிகளும் தெலுங்கிலும், வடமொழி யிலும் பாடல்கள் புனைந்த போதிலும் இவர்கள் தமிழ் நாட்டிலே பிறந்து இசை வளர்த்து பெருமை சேர்த்தவர் எனலாம். இதனால் தமிழ் மண்ணின் பெருமை புலனாகும். உலகம் வியக்க மேள கர்த்தா ராக சக்கரங்களையும், இசை இலக்கணங்களையும் வகுத்த ஸ்ரீ வேங்கடமகி என்னும் பெரியாரும் அவரின் சிறந்த நூலான "சதுர்தண்டி பிரகாசிகையும்", தமிழ்நாட்டின் பொக்கிஷங்கள் எனப் பெருமிதம் கொள்ளலாம். அவரைத் தொடர்ந்து ஸ்ரீ சுப்பராம தீக்ஷிதரின் "சங்கீத சம்பந்தாய ப்ரதர்சினி" தமிழ்நாட்டில் உருவான நூல்கள்.

இவர்களுக்கு முன்னும் பின்னும் இசை வளர்த்த பெரியோர்கள் இருந்திருக்கின்றனர், இருக்கின்றனர், இருக்கப் போகின்றனர். நம் கவின்மிகு தமிழ்நாட்டில் இசை விஞ்ஞானி களாகத் திகழ்ந்த, இசைப் பேரறிஞராகச் சுடர் விட்ட திரு.விபுலானந்த அடிகள், பேராசிரியர் பி. சாம்பமூர்த்தி, டாக்டர் எஸ். ராமனாதன் முதலானவர்களை இசையுலகம் என்றுமே மறவாது, மறக்கவும் கூடாது.

விபுலானந்த அடிகள் பல ஆராய்ச்சிகள் செய்து வெளியிட்ட "யாழ்நூல்" கரந்தைத் தமிழ் சங்கத்தினரால் வெளியிடப்பட்டது.

வயிற்றுப் பசிக்கு கஸ்தூரி, கோரோஜனை விற்பும், மனப்பசிக்கு இசை வளர்த்தும் பெருமை கண்ட தஞ்சை டாக்டர் மூ. ஆபிரகாம் பண்டிதரின் இசைப் பெருமையும் அவரின் நூலான 'கர்ணாமிருத ஶாகரமும்' தமிழ் இசைக்கே உரித்தான சொத்து.

பேராசிரியர் சாம்பமூர்த்தியே இசைக்கலைக் களஞ்சி யமாகத் திகழ்ந்தவர்.

தமிழிசைக்குப் பேரொளி கூட்டியவர் டாக்டர் எஸ். ராம னாதன். அவர் செய்த தமிழ்ப்பண் ஆராய்ச்சிகள் அநேகம். பண்டைய, இன்றைய ராகங்களின் ஒற்றுமை, வேற்றுமைகளை தெளிவுபடுத்தினார். "சிலப்பதிகார இசை" என்ற ஆய்வு நூலை இயற்றியுள்ளார்.

இக்கட்டுரையில் இன்னும் எவ்வளவோ தமிழ் இசை வளர்த்த பெரியோர்கள் விடுபட்டுப் போயிருக்கலாம். அதற்கு அறிந்தவர்கள் பிறர்க்கு அறிவிக்காததாலும், வேண்டிய குறிப்புகளும், செய்திகளும் தொடர்ச்சியாக கிடைக்காததே காரணம்.

மாடுமேய்க்கும் கண்ணே - நீ

போகவேண்டாம் சொன்னேன்

காய்ச்சின பாலும் தரேன்

கற்கண்டு வெண்ணை தரேன் - என்ற

குழந்தைப் பருவத்தில் கற்ற பாடல் பசுமையாக நினைவிருந்தாலும் அதை இயற்றிய ஆசிரியரை அறிந்தவர் யார்? இதுபோல் வழி வழியாய் வந்துள்ள மழலை இசையின் ஆசிரியர்கள் யார் என்ற எண்ண அலைகள் எழுந்த போதிலும் தமிழிசையைப் பரப்ப பல பெரியோர் தங்கள் வாழ்க்கையை அர்ப்பணித்துள்ளனர். அர்ப்பணிப்பர் என்ற நம்பிக்கை ஜோதியின் பேரொளியில் மனம் பெருமிதம் கொள்ளுகிறது. இதயம் துள்ளுகிறது.

தேன் சிந்தும் தமிழிசையின் கவைகண்டார்

வான் பொருந்தும் நெறிகண்டார்.

Courtesy:

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Edited by Dr. (Smt.) Sulochana Rajendran, Published by Shri S. Seshadri for Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Mumbai - 400 022 and printed by him at SEVAK PRESS, B-1, Shalimar Industrial Estate, Matunga Labour Camp, Mumbai - 400 019.

Registered with Registrar of News Papers for India R. N. No. 27938/75